

Towards a Society based on Mutual Aid, Voluntary Cooperation & the Liberation of Desire

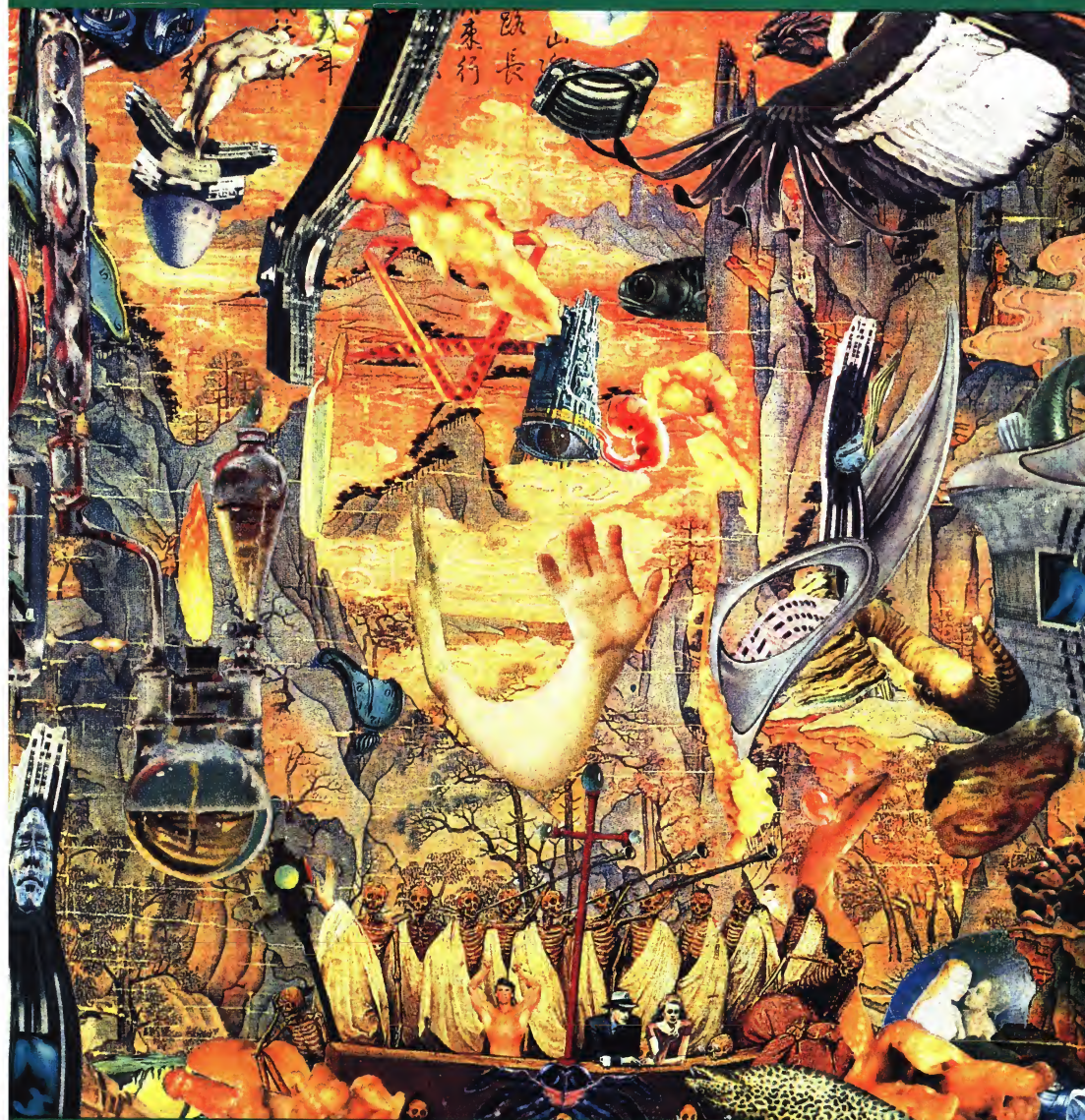
#40/Spring-Summer '94

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# Anarchy

A Journal of Desire Armed



A LIBERTARIAN FRANKENSTEIN ♦ NONMONOGAMY

REVERSAL OF PERSPECTIVE ♦ FLORES MAGON



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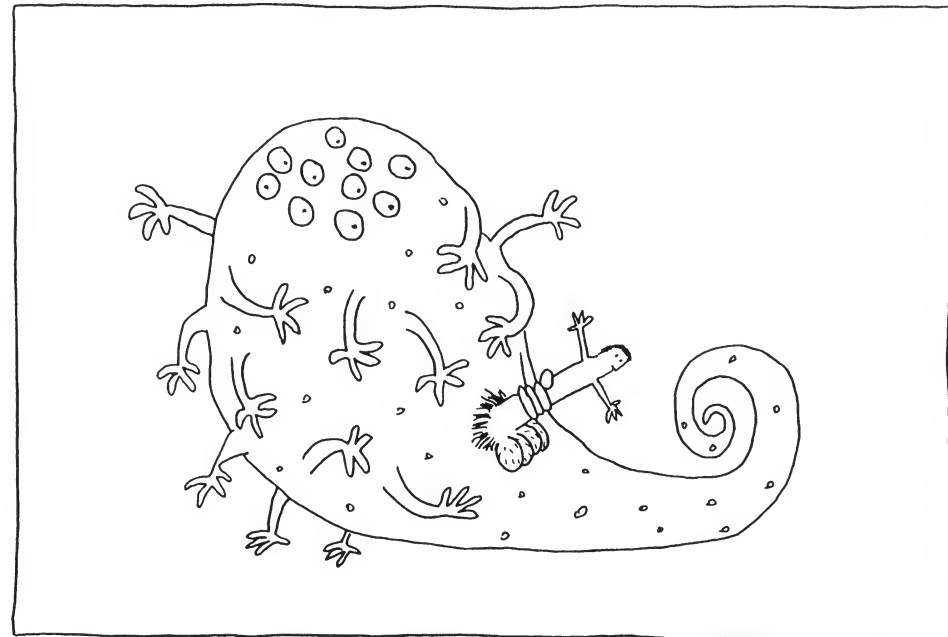
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Short news and comment articles or reviews which are used in "Openers," "The Sad Truth," "Alternative Media Review" or "International Anarchist News" may be edited for brevity and style. Other submissions (features, fiction) will be edited only with the author's permission. **Anarchy** editors reserve the power to make editorial comments, to run introductions or responses, to classify articles, and to place sidebars wherever deemed appropriate. Until we can afford to remunerate authors, photographers, and graphic artists for their published contributions we will give free issues &/or subscriptions, or other appropriate tokens of our appreciation. **Deadlines** for submissions are Jan. 31st for the Spring issue, April 30th for the Summer issue, July 31st for the Fall issue, and Oct. 31st for the Winter issue, but it *always* helps to get submissions in earlier!

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God getting the idea to  
 create man in His own image.



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"The whirligig of time has its revenges."

--B.A.G. Fuller



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## Inside Anarchy

Welcome to the Spring/Summer '94 issue of **Anarchy**. It's been longer than usual between issues, but we hope to be back on schedule in the Fall. At 100 pages this issue is a little bigger than previous ones in order to make up for the fact that it's covering two seasons, and also to help us catch up a bit more with the continuing backlog of letters! Subscribers don't worry, though, this will only count as one issue of your subscription.

Originally this issue was planned as a second "Libertarian Fiction" issue, following the first one (#32) by two years. It was also planned to be a double-issue. However, time, finances, and other factors have led to more of a compromise issue featuring our longest letters column yet, several interesting pieces of fiction, and several important non-fiction pieces, including Michael William's critique of libertarian municipalist electoralism in Montreal. And all this is framed by an impressive wrap-around cover collage by James Koehnline.

Regular readers will once again note that the pages and pages of alternative periodical reviews remain absent from the "Alternative Media Review" section of this magazine. They've been moved to a new quarterly publication, **Alternative Press Review**, whose third issue has just recently appeared. Contents of the new issue include a long interview with members of the Left Bank Books collective in Seattle, notes toward a history of zines, and reprints from a variety of excellent zines and magazines. Sample copies of **APR** are available for \$4.50 (\$5.00 first class), and subscriptions are \$16/year (checks made out to C.A.L., please at POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446).

Our next issue will be the Fall '94 **Anarchy** (#41), so please don't expect another

issue this summer. The fall issue will probably be a special issue on "individualism." Michael William and friends in Montréal will be editing the theme material for this issue over the summer, and invite submissions sent to:

**Michael William**  
CP 1554, Succ. B  
Montréal, Québec H3B 3L2  
Canada

In a big change for this magazine, the fall issue should be published from New York by a new editorial and production collective. This is primarily due to a lack of energy locally to help with production here in Columbia, as well as to my desire to move on to other projects and to travel more. I hope readers, subscribers, writers and artists will all be supportive of this move. One way you can help is to begin a new subscription this summer, or to extend your current subscription. Those who subscribe or extend for two years can get a free book. And those who take the plunge and subscribe or extend for three years can get two free books. Check out the offer on the facing page!

The new address for **Anarchy** is:  
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I'll be taking the summer off in order to do some long-awaited traveling, so don't expect to get any quick responses to correspondence sent here to Columbia, MO. during this time. As soon as I return I'll do my best to bring all correspondence up to date. But I can make no promises.

And finally, although there once again wasn't room to include a list of sustaining contributors on this page, we remain thankful for the extra help sustainers provide for this project. And, we also thank everyone who has contributed in whatever way—subscribing, writing, art, etc. Above all, **Anarchy** is a collective project requiring widespread participation for success. -Jason M.

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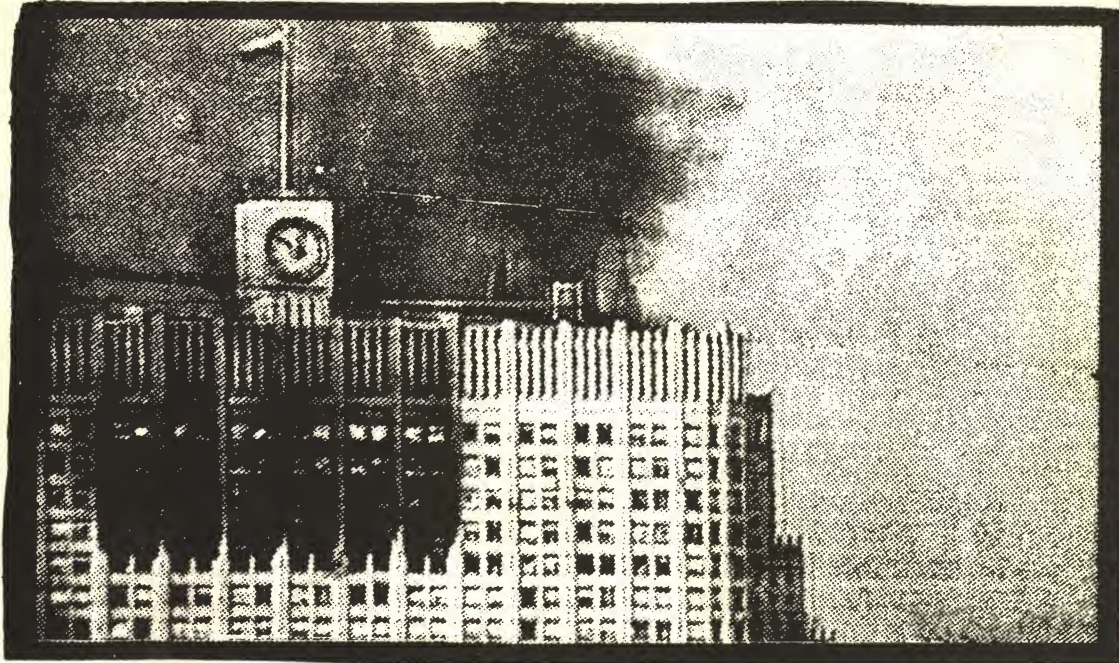
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# THE SEPTEMBER PUTSCH:

## What really happened, and what didn't.

Any careful observer of world politics would not be surprised to find out the following:

1. That CNN lied when they reported that everybody supported Yeltsin. A good deal of people did, but many supported the White House defenders—perhaps as much as 30-40% of the population. (The T.V. show "Public Opinion" which has a phone in poll found that 20% of the viewers supported the death penalty for Yeltsin. Similar polls were conducted with similar results but were suppressed.) In addition, a large percentage of the population supported neither side, or supported Yeltsin only because he seemed the "lesser of two evils".

2. That Yeltsin's troops were under orders to let The White House and Ostankino be stormed to provide the justification for shooting up the opposition. (Chernomyrdin had warned journalists a few days before to be especially careful on the fourth).

3. Stories of "armed bands of communists and fascists on the loose" were used by Yeltsin to create public terror and provide a justification for imposing martial law.

4. People trying to surrender during siege were shot.

5. Yeltsin bans all sorts of papers, including ones that haven't been published in six months and gives the communist censors their jobs

back. Journalists are warned to "censor themselves".

6. Politicians who opposed Yeltsin but who had nothing to do with the events per se were arrested and beaten.

Yeltsin's democracy is very much reminiscent of some third world dictatorships where violence, repression and totalitarianism is needed to make the way clear for the multi-nationals.

Yeltsin's move to disband the parliament may have been the last thing that could have served as an impetus to rally people before the Gaidar program would go into full swing. But it wasn't because the only clearly organized force against capitalism is the red-brown alliance of communists and fascists, who represent to most people repression, authoritarianism, and misery of the socialist realist sort.

New traditions need to be formed in this country. There are little to no citizen's initiatives or grassroots activities. Everything was always done by and dictated by the state. People see no force except for political forces who, by nature, are always involved in power struggles which few people can get behind. In the rare occasion that people do act on their own initiative, this initiative is disrupted by some political bastards. There is a general feeling of powerlessness among the unorganized people.

The fact that many thousands of people took no action at all during these tragic events attests to this. The only remedy for society is beginning to look not towards the government or political parties for solutions to their situation, and more importantly, for action on their behalf, but towards themselves, friends, colleagues and neighbors. Passivity must be broken.

Neither side in this battle should have been supported. Yeltsin the dictator who signs decrees by the dozen. Rutskoi the anti-semitic, anti-woman, anti-gay Colonel who supports keeping control for those in power as much as Yeltsin. The Yeltsin supporters who made themselves police and conducted body searches of people who weren't dressed rich enough. The fascist Rutskoi supporters who would like to run their own police state if they had their way. The only healthy reaction to this all would have been to do something else. But, this is exactly what didn't happen. Tens of thousands of people who are fed up with it all, who don't trust any politicians, went around as if in a fog, not being able to think of what to do, or, if they had, being too well trained to act on their desires.

It's time to tear down the fortresses of the mind. -Laure Akai





## MOSCOW: *This Ain't Los Angeles*

Of the most bizarre aspects of the events which took place in Moscow from Oct. 4-5 was the fact that property relations were more or less held as sacred. The angry crowd which stormed the White House on Oct. 4 was made up of some of the organized opposition, but mainly was fueled by onlookers and passersby who joined up with the crowd, which swelled to about 10,000 people. Obviously many of those people hadn't been staked out at the White House before and were motivated by the spirit of the moment to express their anger. The target of their anger was almost exclusively the government; they primarily destroyed army vehicles and stormed government buildings, the only damage done to any advertising apparently was outside the American Embassy compound. On the way to the White House, commercial kiosks remained intact, BMW's lined the street and advertising displays urged you to by sleek western products, way

out of reach of the average Russian consumer. Part of the reason that communists and the poor didn't loot is because "banditry" had a very bad image during all of the Soviet years. They did not want to appear as thieves to the public, but rather as martyrs willing to die for the public good. Ironically, if any looting would have been done, it would have been done by the overtly materialistic "new Russians", pro-Yeltsin to the core, who are most renowned in this country for being willing to do anything for flashy clothes and luxury consumer goods.

Tactically, mass looting would have been extremely effective. Companies considering doing business here, and those that would have had severe property loss may very well have packed up and moved. After all, much of the economic disaster here is due to the fact that the government is trying to create incentives for people to "do business"; these incentives include selling off businesses and natural re-

sources at extremely low prices, setting a low exchange rate, and having a minimum wage on which one can only live a bread and water existence.

Politically there is justice in going directly to the people who get rich off your misery. This includes not only retailers who sell back products to their producers at many times the cost, but also all owners of businesses where the bosses get rich off of the labor of workers.

So what do people believe the government will do? Let workers control the product of their labor? This will never happen, not even in so-called "workers' states". Forget about the government. Direct action and monkeywrenching, and a complete overturning of the property relations around us are the only things which will bring any results immediately and will take power out of the hands of the bureaucrats and place it in the hand of you and me....

-Laure Akai



# DEFENDING THE COMMONS

"Marx made a thorough analysis of the production process as an exploitation of labor, but he made only cursory and reluctant comments about the prerequisite for capitalist production, about the initial capital that made the process possible. Without the initial capital, there could have been no investments, no production, no great leap forward. This prerequisite was analyzed by the early Soviet Russian marxist, Preobrazhensky, who borrowed several insights from the Polish marxist Rosa Luxemburg to formulate his theory of primitive accumulation. By primitive, Preobrazhensky meant the basement of the capitalist edifice, the foundation, the prerequisite. his prerequisite cannot emerge from the capitalist production process itself, if that process is not yet under way. It must, and does, come from outside the production process. It comes from the plundered colonies. It comes from the expropriated and exterminated population of the colonies. In earlier days, when there were no overseas colonies, the first capital, the prerequisite for capitalist production, had been squeezed out of internal colonies, out of plundered peasants whose lands were enclosed and crops requisitioned, out of expelled jews and muslims whose possessions were expropriated.

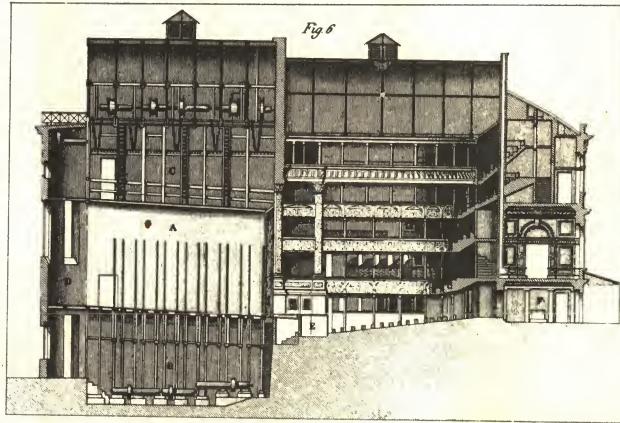
The primitive or preliminary accumulation of capital is not something that happened once, in the distant past, and never after. It is something that continues to accompany the capitalist production process, and is an integral part of it." *Fredy Perlman, The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism.*

There is a tendency to think of enclosure as simply a question of the land dispossession of European squatters, laborers and peasants, but even at the height of these clearances enclosure embraced a wider commons than this. It wasn't just the means of subsistence which were brought under more intense regulation but a profusion of independent activities and communal entities. Custom, which dispensed justice, set limits and sustained the community, became subject to increasing intervention from a burgeoning class of professional administrators. Social care became institutionalized in workhouses and asylums as the commons of self-sustenance fell to the invading norms of wage labor, taxation and individualism. Time itself became more strictly managed.

It is not my intention to mourn a better age than this one, but to remind readers of what happened in the "classic" age of enclosure the better to understand the process today. Enclosure wasn't about dispossession, (although such expropriation continues with a vengeance

in the unfortunately developing world) it involved a new discipline of the mind, a new way of being in the world, with new scarcities and concerns. It broke people into faster rhythms and more exacting conditions of living. It corroded the vestiges of autonomous sociability.

There are some who are puzzled by an



apparent obsession with professional and managerial power, when there appear to be more pressing evils to confront. The critique of this class looks as if it is disengaged from the deeper problems of making one's way through life, almost a luxury in a period of concentrated necessity. It's my view at least, that the growth of this class is concomitant with the disappearance of the commons, and that the disappearing commons continue to be a major source of present miseries. For, as Perlman notes above, the continued existence of capitalism depends on expanding enclosure. This doesn't just happen in the diminishing wilderness of the world, or the dwindling number of colonies to plunder, but right at the heart of everyday life in the overdeveloped zones. Spaces which were once at least contestable, like city streets, become objects of intense surveillance, as a prelude to transforming them into practically the private property of the local state. Streets become traffic conduits, destroying the variety and possibility they could have as sources of both sustenance and pleasure. What's left of custom shrinks from the multi-disciplinary assault of teeming professionalisms. Enclosure circumscribes matter and immateriality alike. It cordons off the emotions in order that they can be turned on and off at the will of management. It embraces social action in order to turn it into manageable skills and procedures, the better to sell courses to people in that which the education system made them forget in the first place.

Enclosure creates value. It turns everything into a resource to be managed, and its unhinged manifestation today is a sign of how little commons are left for transformation. While

technology can be relied upon to discover new resources in the world of genetics or cyberspace, it is questionable whether they will provide enough new value to overcome capital's problems. So simultaneously the creeping invasion of self conscious, altering our perception of what it is to be a human being by break-

ing up everyday existence into a series of social skills requiring tutelage and assessment. Now body and soul are "human resources at the service of enterprises and the functions of both are required to submit to self-administered cost/benefit analysis. Life disintegrates into tasks and projects and it is professionalism which investigates and measures them.

The consequence of this (the "hidden cost" in Economy-Speak) is not just the redefinition of self-hood according to the interests of professionals and capitalists, is not just the loss of autonomy and growth of dependence upon the State and Capital, but also involves a quiet invalidation of our human being, as experiences, thoughts and feelings are submerged

under the same laws of scarcity and resource management as everything else. The dream of socialists for a synchronicity between the economy and human needs looks like being fulfilled, except that it is humans who are being "economized" rather than the economy being humanized.

Only some of the opponents of capitalism are beginning to grasp what is going on. The Left remains gripped by alternative resource management, arguing for public rather than private enclosure, thereby bolstering up rather than dissolving the legitimacy of transforming commons into resources. But there are people who recognize that self-sustenance and a restoration of some part of the commons in their lives are essential prerequisites for some sort of good living, be they travellers, allotment holders or home educators. Extension of such arrangements would help create the vital precondition for a successful revolt against the economy's dominion. It would nurture communities which are not only against the state but independent of it as well. Continually capital itself finds things falling out of its orbit, as human beings find use for what exchange value found waste, but rarely does use hold out against the transition to value. The defense of the commons emerges from resistance to the latest enclosure. Twyford Down and Jesmond Heath have brought that resistance back to the forefront of anti-capitalist rebellion. Awareness of both the ubiquity and variety of enclosure including all its beneficiaries is a first step on the road to reversing the incursion of scarcity into existence. -Peter Porcupine Reprinted from *Here and Now* #14, c/o Transmission Gallery, 28 King Street, Glasgow G1 5QP, Scotland.





Collage by Johann Humyn Being



## Anarchist press review

Compiled by Jason McQuinn & Tad Kepley

**Friendly Fire.** The issue is rounded out by a long and sometimes insightful review of Guy Debord's *Commentaires sur la Société du Spectacle* contributed as well by Bracken. All in all this is an uneven but promising premiere issue. Just about everything included deserves digestion and further comment. Subscriptions are \$3/copy (checks payable to Bracken).

**GREEN ANARCHIST** #33/Winter '93 & #34/Spring '94 (Box H, 34 Cowley Rd., Oxford OX4 1HZ, U.K.) is now a greatly more readable, 16-page anti-civilization tabloid, newly subtitled "For a free society in harmony with nature." The Winter issue includes follow-up coverage of the ultimately failed but militant resistance to the Twyford Down roadway, along with a summary of a new pamphlet exposing the (supposedly) antifascist *Searchlight* magazine. The Spring issue includes a piece on "Sexual liberation" (arguing against any set age-of-consent), along with a discussion on the nature of economic classes, and a critique of "Left-wing organizations" (as being inherently counter-revolutionary). Subscriptions are £4.75 IMO for 5 issues.

### ALSO RECEIVED:

**A-S Info** #4/Summer '93 (Damier Vadim, POB 55, 109544 Moscow-544, Russia) is a small-format, 16-page "Bulletin of Anarchism and Syndicalism in Eastern and Central Europe." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Serf City Black Banner** #2/Jan.'94 (POB 7691, Santa Cruz, CA. 95061) is a new locally oriented, 20-page "Newsletter of the S.C. Anarchist Movement." Issue #2 includes Anders Corr's worthwhile piece on "Landed dispossession in the United States and the world: The statistics," an account of a bizarre "Voices of Revolution" forum in which leftist and anarchist groupuscules (including the IWW, WSA, SCAM, RWL and RCP) argued over what revolution is, and a "Communique from the general command of the EZLN" giving an account of the recent indigenous uprising in Southern Mexico from the perspective of the Zapatistas. Copies are \$1 postpaid.

**Freedom: Anarchist fortnightly** Vol.54, #22/Nov.13,'93 thru Vol.55, #6/Mar.19,'94 (84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England) is a long-running 8-page tabloid of news and comment. These issues includes pieces on a multitude of interesting subjects. Issues #2 & #3 include a two part piece on "Mexico: Magical realism confronts heroic materialism," and every issue includes a new installment of Donald Rorum's consistently good "Wildcat" comic strip. Subscriptions are £18.00/year (24 issues).

**Kaspahraster** #8/Oct.'93 thru #10/April '94 (POB 8831, Portland, OR. 97207) is an attractive 32 to 50-page zine of reviews; poetry, comment, computer mail, dreams and graphics. Issue #8 includes a reprint titled "The Tong" (from Hakim Bey's *Radio Sermonettes* pamphlet). Issues #9 and #10 feature the first two parts of a serialized story titled "1World" by the publisher, Jean Heriot. Send \$2 cash for a sample.

**Profane Existence** #21/Jan.-Feb.'94 (POB 8722, Minneapolis, MN. 55408) is a 24-page anarcho-punk tabloid, now publishing on an irregular basis. This issue features squatter/anarchist/resistance news, lots of columns, letters and zine/noise reviews, and band interviews with Misery, So Much Hate, Civil Disobedience and Acid Rain Dance. The publishing collective is now getting back on its feet after a sparse output for 1993. Sample copies are \$3 postpaid.

**Plain Words** #3/Feb.-Mar.'94 (P.A.C., POB 8532, Haledon, NJ. 07508-8532) is a nicely-done 16-page tabloid subtitled "A Paper for the Oppressed People of Passaic County." This issue includes a piece on "Economic cleansing in Haledon" by Mathias Degan, a center section on the Zapatista uprising, and a two-page "Copwatch" section. Every city could use a locally oriented newspaper like this. Subscriptions are \$5/year (4 issues).

**Love and Rage** Vol.4, #5/Nov.'93 thru Vol.5, #1/Mar.-April '94 (Box 3, Prince St. Station, New York, NY. 10012) is a 20-page left anarchist news-bimonthly now published entirely in English (the Spanish section has now become a separate project publishing in Mexico City under the title *Amor y Rabia*). The September issue includes an account of the San Diego Love and Rage Conference (which resulted in the break-up of the

"network" and its replacement by a smaller "federation") and the first part of Ron Taber's "Anarchist critique of Marxism." The November issue includes Elizabeth Bright & Todd Prane's "Impressions of the Mexican anarchist movement." And the March-April issue has a theme of "Feminism and Revolution," along with a special section on the Chiapas uprising. Subscriptions are now \$13.00/year (6 issues).

**The Infinite Onion** #9/Dec.'93 (POB 263, Colorado Springs, CO. 80901) is now a 12-page anarcho-punk tabloid of opinion and comment. This issue includes a short piece by Hakim Bey on Chinese secret societies titled "The Tong." Sample copies are now \$1.50 postpaid.

**Mother Anarchy** #5/Oct.-Nov.'93 (Laure Akai, PO Box 500, Moscow 107061, Russia) is a 24-page special issue of this zine dealing with Yeltsin's coup in Russia last October. It includes Sebastian Job's very long and interesting eyewitness account of the events of Oct. 3rd titled "The Russian White House won and lost," Laure Akai's "Ethnic cleansing a la Russe," and "No political solutions." No price listed; send a donation for printing and postage.

**Libertarian Labor Review** #16/Winter '94 (POB 762, Cortland, NY. 13045) is a 42-page magazine of "Anarchosyndicalist Ideas and Discussion." This issue features Jon Bekken on "The American health care crisis: Capitalism," and Graham Purchase's somewhat pathetic "Why anti-syndicalist 'anarchists' ought to think a little more clearly" (for example, he argues that "the factory system if it was managed and operated upon a collective basis by the workers themselves, far from representing a dehumanizing and unrewarding experience might well become a richly human one"). Subscriptions are \$12/4 issues (2 years).

**Free Society** Vol.2, #2/undated (POB 7293, Minneapolis, MN. 55407) is a 22-page zine including an article on "The revolutionary spirit: Hannah Arendt and anarchy," and Ynestra King on "The other body: Reflections on difference, disability, and identity politics." Subscriptions are \$10/4 issues.

**Discussion Bulletin** #62/Nov.-Dec.'93 thru #64/Mar.-April '94 (POB 1564, Grand Rapids, MI. 49501) is a 32-page assortment of letters and reprinted articles primarily from the anti-market, non-statist radical milieu. Issue #64 includes a sad description of the mechanics of the "Green Gathering, 1993" by Don Fitz. All three issues include an important ongoing argument over the nature of democracy and its relation to revolutions. Subscriptions are \$3/year (6 issues).

**RSVP** #15/Feb.-Mar. & #17/Apr.-May '94 (Tad Davies, 821 Highway

As always, we're happy to exchange with other periodicals (of 8 pages or more—or 4 pages if tabloid size). We try to list all the anarchist publications that we receive in a timely way, but please be aware that there are times when this is impossible due to time and space limitations. Also keep in mind that the *Anarchy* issue we send for exchanges will be the one your publication is reviewed in, so please be patient. Please note that we no longer exchange with non-English-language publications that are not anarchist in orientation. Reviews in this column by Tad Kepley are marked (TK).

Publishers please note: To ensure that your publications are reviewed in future issues, send all zines and magazines to our new address: B.A.L. Press, POB 2647, Stuyvesant St., New York, NY 10009.

**RAVEN** #24/Oct.-Dec.'93 (Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England) is a well-produced, 96-page quarterly journal published as a companion to *Freedom: Anarchist Fortnightly*. The theme for issue #24 (and for the upcoming issue #25) is (pro-) "Science," including an array of articles singing the praises of science and technology while warning in dire tones of the evil results which would inevitably come from the rejection of science (which, anyway, is seen as being impossible). Contributions include John Pilgrim's earth-shattering "The necessity of science," and Nigel Calder's plaintive plea to "Give science a chance." This issue reminds me of all the self-styled "libertarian" capitalists, whose blind belief in the dogmas of a capitalism that is "really" incompatible with the state is analogous to the obtuse belief of these science boosters that the scientific-industrial enterprise will only really thrive when government is abolished! You have to wonder what world they are living in. Bio-technology and chaos theory über alles! Subscriptions are £12/year.

**EXTRAPHILE** #1/Spring '94 (POB 5585, Arlington, VA. 22205) is a new 50-page "Quarterly Journal of the 1st Extranational" (a "union of egos" consisting of Len Bracken and Bob Black). This first issue begins with a somewhat inconsistent (but interesting nonetheless) manifesto titled "The First Extranational: Provisional resolutions towards a union of egoists," and this is followed by reprints of Peter L. Wilson's "An immediatist potlatch" and Neal Keating's "Rioting and looting as a modern-day form of potlatch." These are followed by contributions from Len Bracken on "Solar economics" and Bob Black on "Primitive affluence: A postscript to Sahlins (from his recent book



Ave., Manhattan Beach, CA. 90266) is a 52-page "co-op publication of writers and a publisher concerned about freedom issues of many different views," with a fair number of anarchists and anti-authoritarians involved. Subscriptions are \$16/year (8 issues + occasional bonus issues).

**Incendiary Devices #4** (POB 22774, Seattle, WA 98122-0774) ...is a lively left anarchist zine from Seattle. This issue includes 40-odd xeroxed pages of interviews with an anti-fascist from British Columbia, Seattle gentrification, prisoner support contacts, and an anti-pacifist rant called "The Nonsense of Nonviolence." \$1.50. (TK)

## OTHER PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

**Happy To Be Annihilated** #10/undated (c/o RR2, 380 Cramer Rd, Dundas, Ontario L9H 5E2, Canada) is a 4-page zine of random thoughts and images concerning control. Send two stamps for a sample copy.

**Lovers Revolt #21/Jan.'94** (POB 6042, Minneapolis, MN. 55406) is a simple, small, 16pp. photocopied zine which mixes a little anarchy with Christianity, community, spirituality and liberalism and packages it all under the title of "the love revolution." Send an SASE for a sample copy.

**The Shadow** April-June '94 (POB 20298, NYC, NY. 10009) is another issue of NYC's premier street activist paper. In this one: Glass House Squat evicted, an interview with EZLN subcommandante Marcos, a report on new NYC mayor Rudy Giuliani's attempt to institute a curfew, and the usual cop-watching. \$1. (TK)

**Semi-Automatic #1** (P. Mullins, POB 281, Chattanooga, TN. 37405) is a 24 page promising entry into anarch publishing. This issue reprints James Koehnline's "Legend of the Great Dismal Maroons", and includes articles on cultural appropriation, and "The Mass Society of Spectacular Consumption". \$1 per issue. (TK)

**Bayou La Rose #43** (POB 5464, Tacoma, WA. 98415) is a tabloid leftist paper dealing with Indigenist nationalism, prisoner support, unionism, Earth First! and related issues. \$2 an issue. (TK)

**Workers Solidarity #6** (POB 40400, San Francisco, CA. 94140) is an eight-page newsletter produced by the Workers Solidarity Alliance. Here you'll find glowing reports of recent syndicalist derring-do, like attending a rally in Chattanooga, and the international WSA conference. Also included is a report on the IWW's recent grand victory in organizing a bingo hall. \$1. (TK)

**The Meander Quarterly** Vol.5, #4/Feb. & #5/May '94 (c/o Ed Stamm, POB 1402, Lawrence, KS.

66044) is a 20 to 24-page "Newsletter of evolutionary anarchists" consisting of letters from contributors along with short news items. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Nolsy Concept #21/Fall '93** (1216 Lincoln Ave., Cuyahoga Falls, OH. 44223-2227) is now a 10-page newsletter of reviews and letters. Samples are \$1; subscriptions are \$4/year.

**Constipation #2 & #4** (Avram Garcia, POB 22774, Seattle, WA. 98122) is an excellent zine produced by anarchist prisoner Ron Campbell from Inside Joliet Prison. Issue #2 has hilarious news from inside the walls and out, and a horoscope. #4 gets even better, with a short fiction piece on "humor"; confessions of a cockroach torturer, etc. \$1 per issue. (TK)

**Jersey Anarchist #13/Nov.'93** thru #16/April '94 (NJAF, POB 8532, Haledon, NJ. 07508) is the 4-page newsletter "Voice of the North Jersey Anarchist Federation." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Cyclists' Cyclical** unnumbered/undated (Section of City Cyclists, c/o Patyczak, SP 20, 61-660 Poznań 31, Poland) is a little 4-page bicycling newsletter with a slightly libertarian slant. Send a contribution for a sample.

**Whine #2/Fall '93.** (Selena, POB 1545, Niland, CA. 92257) an eight page xerox zine of reprints and poetry. This issue includes a reprint from Riot Grrrl zine and a few zine reviews. Two stamps. (TK)

**Angry People #6** (POB 183, Waterloo, N.S.W. 2017, Australia) is a ten page militant anarchist zine with a heavy Class War influence. This issue is lots of fun with articles on "tackling unemployment" destroying power, and crime. A highly confrontational read. \$2. (TK)

**A.B.C. Discussion Bulletin #1/Jan.-Feb.'94** (Nightcrawlers ABC, POB 20181, NYC, NY. 10009) is a new xeroxed networking magazine for Anarchist Black Cross groups in North America and internationally. In this issue are letters and proposals from various groups in the loose network- published, it seems, in an attempt to draw these diverse groups into a bureaucratic structure with a "charter". \$2. (TK)

**Animadverse #10-#11** (P.O. Box 57464, Jackson Station, Hamilton, ONT., Canada L8P 4X3) "...produced at will for anarchist/autonomist struggle". This issue includes prisoner support news, communiqués from Mexico, an article on rape, ALF news, zine reviews, and a discussion of police brutality. \$2. (TK)

**B Journal #4** (Old Erie Press, 822 Nold Avenue, Wooster, OH. 44691) "The Unofficial Vehicle of the Great Lakes Alternative Arts Alliance" poet-

ry, news, short fiction and reviews from "an anarchical point of view" \$2 an issue. (TK)

**Black Fist** Vol.1, #4 (15110 Bellaire, Box 317, Houston TX. 77083) "Houston's anarchist zine" is a highly militant, confrontational 16 page zine, including; A Moorish Orthodox Bulletin on the Zapatista uprising, an article on the "gang war" being carried out by the Houston police, some info briefs, and reviews of various firearms. Lively, fun stuff. \$2 per issue. (TK)

**Little Free Press #93/Nov.'93** thru #104/May '94 (714 Third St. SE, Little Falls, MN. 56345-3510), is a long-running 4-page newsletter of ideas for living freely in a "priceless economic system." Each issue includes thoughts on living freely (and other topics like crime, welfare, psychopaths and war) by publisher Earnest Mann. Subscriptions are now \$2 (subscription length as yet undetermined).

**A Infos #13/Sept.'93-Jan.'94** (c/o Int. Secr. LAS, POB 61523, 2506 am Den Haag, Netherlands) is a 12-page photocopied information bulletin covering recent events in the Netherlands. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**The Blast! #1/April-May '94** (POB 7075, Mpls, MN. 55407) is a brand new 28-page tabloid bringing an "activist" anarchist perspective to Minneapolis. This first issue includes a long "Political statement for the Agitator Index Collective" (publishers of the paper), and an interview with "Lorenzo Kombo Ervin: Black revolution in the 1990s." Cover price is \$1; subscriptions are \$9/6 issues.

**The Harbinger #2/undated** (POB 127, 39120 Argonaut Way, Fremont, CA. 94536) is a 24-page punk-anarchist tabloid with a graphically presented theme this issue of "No Penis Culture." Articles include "He speaks: The state's assault on abortion and declension of the women's movement," "Christian republic near you," and "We kicked O.R.'s ass in San Jose, kind of." Send a donation for a sample copy.

**MuseLetter #25/Jan.** thru #28/April '94 (Richard Heinberg, 1433 Olivet Rd., Santa Rosa, CA. 95401) is a very readable 4-page monthly comment zine. Each issue includes one essay or review. The January issue asks "Is money evil?" The March and April issues share two parts of one essay titled "Toward a rebirth of culture," arguing that civilization must be placed in critical perspective. Subscriptions are \$15/year.

**No #10/undated** (POB 175, Liverpool, L69 8DX, U.K.) is probably the last issue of this 14-page "Project of the Museum of Modern Alienation." This issue includes short pieces on "Librarians with attitude!" and a

reformist diatribe titled "What the hell does 'To achieve zero work' mean?" Send at least \$1 or \$2 for a sample copy.

**FAU International News Flash** Vol.2, #1/Jan.'94 (International Secretariat, Freie Arbeiterinnen Union Geko, c/o Buchladen Le Sabot, Breite Strasse 76, D-53111 Bonn, Germany) is a 6-page English-language summary of the German-language anarchist-syndicalist tabloid *Direkte Aktion*. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**An-Press #1/Dec.'92-Mar.'93** (194018, Russia, St.-Petersburg, 33 Parhomenko pr., apt. 76, Alexander V. Malshev) is the first issue of this 8-page "Review of [the] Russian Anarchic Movement" from the "Information Publishing Agency of Anarchists." Copies are \$3.

**The Connection #193/Nov.'93** thru #196/May '94 (Box 3343F, Fairfax, VA 22038) is a 48 to 56-page apa, formerly titled *The Libertarian Connection*, featuring page upon page of tiny-print discussions, all originating from reader-participants. Sample copies are \$2.50; subscriptions are \$20/8 issues (checks to E. Strauss).

**@ News #4/Oct.-Dec.'93** (POB 30557, 10033 Athens, Greece) is a 4-page "Informative Bulletin" published in concert with the Greek-language *Anarchic Intervention*. Send a contribution for a sample.

**Viscosity Breakdown #1/Nov.'93** (515-916 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V5Z 1K7, Canada) is a nicely done 20-page zine in an unusual format (5 1/2 x 8 1/4). This first issue includes the publisher's journal entries, along with lots of short pieces (including "The dinner party" and "In defense of welfare") and quotes from a variety of authors. Sample copies are \$1.

**No Nation Bulletin #16/Winter '94** (People to People Friendship Ass., c/o Sören Groth, Ådalen, Saltå Arb. Skola, 15 300 Järna, Sweden) is a photocopied 16-page exchange of short letters and announcements from people living on different continents. Subscriptions are U.S.\$5/year (4 issues).

**Tensor #1/undated** (POB 1311, Carbondale, IL. 62903) is a new, bizarrely paginated (ending on page 3,659!) little Deleuzian zine (for Deleuze and Guattari tensors "deteritorialize language"). Single copies are \$1.

**P.C. #1, Winter '93** (P.O. Box 664, Stn. C., Toronto, Ont. Canada) is a new 44-page leftist anarchist journal. This issue: Interviews with one of the Econmedia folks and punk band Ignatz, articles from the last (unpublished) issue of *Reality Now*, and on Anti Racist Action round it out. \$3 anywhere. (TK)



**Contra Flow** Sept.'93 (c/o 56a info shop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17, England) Xeroxed news and information from anarchist contacts around the world. Informative. (TK)

**Digital Revolution #2** (Brian Crabtree, 1227 Ranch Valley Drive, DeSoto, TX. 75115) Spunk Press, "How to build your own TV transmitter using commercially available parts", Randy Weaver, flag desecration, it's all here in 20 xeroxed pages. \$1. (TK)

## NON-ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

**Action #9**/Jan.-Feb.'94 (FAM c/o Antonio Grozdev, 18 Nikola Slakov St., ET.1, AP.6, Sofia 1463, Bulgaria) is the 8-page "Information Newsletter" of the Federation of Anarchistic Youth in Bulgaria (FAM). FAM is actively seeking to establish contacts and periodical exchanges. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Gratis** unnumbered/Nov.'93 (CP 2259, 50100 Firenze F, Italy) is a professionally produced new 32-page, Italian-language "Catalogo in Rivista," including reviews of 12 books covering anti-tech to surrealist themes. Copies are free.

**Tesão #1**/Nov.'93 (C.P. 70513, CEP 05013-990 São Paulo-SP, Brasil) is a new Portuguese-language newsletter, including a short piece on Capoeira in this issue. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Umanita' Nova** Vol.73, #34/7 Nov.'93 thru Vol.74, #10/27 Mar.'94 (c/o G.C.A. Pinelli, via Roma 48, 87019 Spezzano Albanese [CS], Italy) is the 8 to 16-page, Italian-language weekly newspaper of the Federazione Anarchica Italiana. Subscriptions are US \$55.00/year.

**Le Libertaire; Revue de Synthèse Anarchiste #140**/Nov.'93 thru #145/Avril '94 (25 rue Dumé d'Aplemont, 76600 Le Havre, France) is a 4-page, monthly, French-language "review of synthetic anarchism" published by the Union des anarchistes. International subscriptions are 80F/-year (10 issues).

**Schwarzer Faden #47**/late '93 & #48/Feb.'94 (Postfach 1159, 7043 Grafenau-1, Germany) is a very solid and well-produced 72-page, German-language magazine, subtitled "Vierteljahresschrift Für Lust und Freiheit." Issue #47 includes Chomsky on "Das Jahr 501," and Markus Mathyl on "Kropotkin und der postsowjetische Anarchismus" (on the recent conference on Kropotkin in Russia). Subscriptions are 60.-DM/8 issues.

**CNT #155**/Nov.'93 thru #157/Enero'94 (CNT-Periódico, Apartado de Correos 2.271, 18.080 Granada, Spain) is the 24-page, Spanish-language newspaper of the anarcho-syndicalist Confederación

Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Workers union). Subscriptions are 2,500ptas./year (12 issues).

**Solidaridad Obrera #242**/Oct.'93 thru #244/Enero '94 (Ronda de San Antonio, 13 pral 08001-Barcelona, Spain) is the 8-page Spanish-language regional newspaper of the anarcho-syndicalist C.N.T. in Catalonia. The front-page stories headlined in the September issue is "Contra la crisis anarcosindicalismo," and announcements of the Sept.-Oct. anarcosyndicalist "Exposició Internacional" in Barcelona. Sample copies are 100ptas plus 20ptas postage.

**Telegraph** Vol.4, #11/Nov.'93 thru Vol.5, #2/Feb.'94 (Schliemannstr. 22, Berlin O-1058, Germany) is a 44 to 52-page German-language publication from East Berlin covering the current situation in Germany. Subscriptions are 34DM/year.

**Perspectief #33**/Oct.'93 & #34/Jan.'94 (Libertaire Studiegroep, Dracenastraat 21, 9000 Gent, Belgium) is a 64f to 80-page Dutch-language journal of libertarian perspectives. Issue #33 includes articles on "Ex-Joegoslavië," "Corrupt socialisme," and "Legalisering van drugs." Issue #34 includes a piece on "Een libertaire ethiek." Subscriptions are 300 Belgian fr or 20 Dutch fl/year (4 issues).

**Rojo y Negro #49**/Oct.'93 thru #52/Enero '94 (Sagunto 15, pral., 28010 Madrid, Spain) is the 16-page, Spanish-language newspaper of the reformist anarcho-syndicalist C.G.T. (Confederación General del Trabajo—a split from the anarcho-syndicalist C.N.T. in Spain). Subscriptions are 1,000ptas/ year (12 issues).

**De Nar #86**/Nov.'93 & #90/Maart '94 (V.Z.W. De Nar, Postbus 104, B-1210, Brussels 21, Belgium)—which translates as "The Fool"—is a 4 to 10-page Dutch-language "monthly anti-authoritarian newspaper." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Brand #57-58**/undated & #60/Feb.'94 (Box 150 15, S-104 65 Stockholm, Sweden) is a lively, 32 to 40-page Swedish-language magazine, with consistently good photography and a fairly activist slant. Issue #60 includes articles on Emma Goldman and the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas. Each issue includes an English-language summary at the back. Cover price is 20KR.

**Anarchic Intervention #9**/Nov.'93 (POB 30557, 10033 Athens, Greece) is an 12-page tabloid published in collaboration with **Angels Mutiny**. Send a contribution for a sample. Cover price is 200 drachmas.

**Social Harmony #9**/Feb.'94 (POB 76148, Nea Smirni T.K. 17110, Athens, Greece) is an 8-page, Greek-language anarcho-communist/com-

munist bimonthly. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Bulten de Orde** Vol.4, #4, Vol.5, #1/Oct.'93-Jan.'94 [double issue] (Vrije Bond, Postbus 1338, 3500 BH Utrecht, Netherlands) is a 40-page Dutch-language magazine of local and international anarchist news and reviews. Subscriptions are 10 guilders/year.

**Hors d'Ordre #4**/Fev.'94 (Collectif Hors d'Ordre, 64, rue de Maisonneuve, app.4, Québec, Québec G1R 2C3, Canada) is a 24-page French-language publication, subtitled "Bulletin de Reflexions Libertaires." This issue features a cover story on "Mouvement étudiant: Contestation ou intégration?" Send \$2 for a sample copy.

**Ekiniza Zuzena: Revista Libertaria #14**/Negua '94 (Ediciones EZ Argitaraldiak, Appdo. 235, Postakutxa, 48080 Bilbo, Bizkaia, Spain) is a nicely-produced, 64-page Spanish-language "libertarian review" from the Basque country. Subscriptions are \$15/4 issues).

**Libera Volo #54**/Okt. thru #56/Nov. '93 (A.R.P., PO Box 57, Sakyo Yubinkyoku, J-606 Kyoto, Japan) is the 6-page Japanese-language newsletter of the Federacio Anarkista of Japan. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**W@rrior #5**/Dec.'93 (A.R.P., PO Box 57, Sakyo Yubinkyoku, J-606 Kyoto, Japan) is an 8-page Japanese-language newsletter "published mainly by young anarchists who are involved in several movements." It includes a back page in English summarizing recent Japanese anarchist activities. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**CIRA Bulletin #50**/Fev.'94 (avenue de Beaumont 24, CH-1012 Lausanne, Switzerland) is a 34-page French-language bulletin of the library of the International Center for Research on Anarchism (C.I.R.A.). Subscriptions are \$25.00/year (including library loan privileges).

**Ektos Nomoy (Against The Law) #17**/Jan.'94 (POB 11251, 541 10 Thessaloniki, Greece) is slickly produced 16-page, Greek-language newspaper. Sample copies are 300 drachmas plus postage.

**Libera... #31**/Dez.'93 & #32/Jan.'94 (C.E.L., CP 14576, CEP 22412-970, Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Brasil) 2pp. Portuguese-language information bulletin by the publishers of **Utopia** magazine. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**De As #104-105**/Summer '93-Winter '94 [double-issue] (Postbus 43, 2750 AA Moerkapelle, Netherlands) appears to be an academically-oriented, Dutch-language, 94-page anarchist journal. This issue includes "Hedendaags anarchisme in België"

by Frances Faes. Subscriptions are f34/year.

**Enciclopèdic Noticiari #2**/Oct. & #3/Des.'93 (Apartat de Correus 22.212, 08080 Barcelona, Spain) is a 12-page Spanish-language publication of the Ateneu Enciclopèdic Popular. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Mordicus #11**/Hiver '93-94 (BP 11, 75622 Paris Cedex 13, France) is a 22-page French-language tabloid which tries to bring a sense of humor to radical journalism. This issue includes a discussion on the journal by those who produce it, along with articles like "Y a-t-il une Yougoslavie apres la mort?" and "Situation! l'imagines!" (a short critique of the post-situationist milieu). The cover price is 20F; subscriptions are 100F/? issues.

**Liberecana Ligilo #77**/Unua '94 (Pelle Persson, Svartviksvägen 14, S-123 52 Farsta, Sweden) is the 4-page bulletin of the libertarian/anarchist faction of the Esperanto-language workers' organization S.A.T., headquartered in Paris. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Ide@ccion #19**/Dic.'93 (Casilla de Correo 984, 2000 Rosario, Argentina) is the 16-page, Spanish-language, libertarian socialist newsletter of the Grupo Impulso Libertario. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**A Voz do Trabalhador #7**/Nov.-Dec.'93 (LTOV-Belém, CP 1206, CEP 66017-970 - Belém/PA, Brasil) is the 4-page newspaper of the Núcleos Pró-COB-AIT which seek to reconstruct the Brazilian Workers Federation as a section of the international anarcho-syndicalist AIT. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**L'anarchie #204**/Nov.'93 thru #206/Jan.'94 (A.O.A., BP 85, 72004 Le Mans, France), subtitled "Journal de l'Ordre," is the 4-page newsletter of the Alliance Ouvrière Anarchiste. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**A-Kontra #63**/93 (POB 552, 17000 Praha 7, Czech Republic) is a special 8-page issue of this "anarchist zine, published by people from Č.A.S. (Czechoslovak Anarchist Union)" covering the murder of a punk band singer/ bass player by fascists. Send a contribution for a sample.

**A Infos #36-#38**/Juillet-Sept.'93 (Humeurs Noires [F.A.], BP 79, 59370 Mons en Baroeul, France) is a 4-page triple-issue of the French edition of the **A-Infos** international "Bulletins d'information"—meant for spreading news for publication in anarchist periodicals. Send a contribution for a sample copy; subscriptions are \$16/year (IMO payable to ALDIR).



# Bad Boys & the Badge on Prime Time

A preoccupation with "realism" has long been the province of the television cop show. *Dragnet*, one of the pioneer police dramas, chronicled the days in the life of L.A.P.D. officer Joe Friday in his own words. In the sixties, the stark, stalwart N.Y.P.D. was a show praised for its no-nonsense depiction of cops, crime and criminals in America's largest city. More recently, the Reagan-era's *Hill Street Blues* was seen by some-or at least marketed by its network-as presenting an "accurate" rendering of good guys and bad.

These days, the Nintendo generation demands more. Or so we are led to believe by the ever-inventive, ever-deceptive denizens of Big Media. The fictional cop show may be going the way of the TV western, with all the Joe Fridays, Baretts, T.J. Hookers, Starskys, Hutch's, and McGarrets fading behind the gunsmoke. A new style of depiction replaces the old character/storyline approach. It is an "in-depth", "on-the-scene" documentary chronicle of the "real-life" cops and criminals. We are seated beside officers in their squad cars, run alongside them in pursuit of (usually black, hispanic or working-class white) perpetrators. Their faces are "protected" through a scrambling of the footage, to bring in a modicum of authenticity.

I made occasion to witness this travesty with *Cops*, which airs on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. The episode of May 6 began with a reggae band intoning "Whatcha gonna do when they come for you?..." interspersed with the stenciled white-on-black *Cops* logo. The effect was eerie; just short of surreal. Prior to this I had been given the proverbial disclaimer: "Cops is on location with the men and women of law enforcement. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty." [As the veiled festivity of the reggae fades, the words "Broward County Florida" flash upon the screen. I was now in the company of Sgt. Ralph Capone, explaining from his moving squad car what would soon transpire. Two plain-clothes men will affect a cocaine purchase from a suspected dealer. "We know this bunch," Capone says, "They couldn't come up with any real weight, but an ounce will still get 'em three years in the system." A digital time flashes upon the screen.

Next it is a parking lot and a bewildered hispanic woman at the wheel of a parked car being told to "freeze" as a plain-clothes cop puts a .38 to her head. Our friend and humble role-model, officer Capone, with standard paunch and bottle brush mustache, arrives on the scene. He tells the woman, grimacing, on the verge of tears, lowers her head upon the roof of the car as she is handcuffed.

An abrupt and frenzied edit follows, with the woman struggling free from the plain-clothes man's grasp as he attempts to recite her "rights". I wondered, at this moment, why the officer's litany did not include a clause such as: "You possess the reproduction and distribution rights to the film now in progress." Anyhow, the woman is now unceremoniously smashed backward onto the hood of the auto by the other plain-clothes man who, with his finger in

her face growls, "Stay still and you won't get hurt." The camera zooms to her face as she nods sheepishly (there is barely room for her to



do so, he is so symmetrically over her that the motive appears pornographic.) Indeed, there is some sort of twisted psycho-sexual subtext. We next learn that the auto belongs to her lover-a woman. I couldn't help but wonder: Is this the lead-off segment of the program deliberately because certain men may be titillated by the image of a lesbian being roughed up?

A commercial for Coors beer follows. Three virile business men sit with loosened ties at a table in a luminous honky-tonk. Their mission: The Coors versus Miller taste test. Coors wins, of course. Not merely because it is Coors sponsored, mind you. These men are white, middle-class and just after a busy day at the helm of corporate America. When they settle down to a beer, they want a beer that excludes blacks, women and homosexuals. They want a MANLY beer. A beer that knows whom its constituency is and what they'll raise a toast to. "A lesbian got battered by a cop? Hey fellas, I'll drink to that."

We return to *Cops* and an aerial view of a seaside metropolis. As we loom closer there are palm trees. Miami, Florida is flashed on the screen. A disembodied voice intones, almost elegiacally, "I treat people good... I try to give 'em a chance..." It is officer Bob Dorigo of Miami's Finest, with his partner on their way to a domestic dispute. A woman placed an emergency call. Her common law husband is beating her-again. As they arrive at the garden apartment complex, the man, who is hispanic, intercepts them. He addresses himself to Dorigo, himself hispanic, explaining in spanish his side of the story. "Please", Dorigo says, "I prefer english." "She don't respect me", the man begins, "and in my country, we don't stand for that. She stay out all day, and I come home and there's nothing to eat." An edit brings us to the man being informed by Dorigo he is under arrest. The woman has visible bruises from her most recent beating and an eyewitness-a neighbor. The man is handcuffed peaceably. Sorry viewers, can't win 'em all. The officers enter the apartment to inform the

woman of the arrest. The woman is four months pregnant, we learn, in addition to two children who are visible to the camera and refer to her as "mom". "We placed your husband or boyfriend or whatever under arrest so everything should be o.k. now". "Boyfriend", the woman says to the officer as she sorts through a pile of clothing on the floor. There is a nasty blotch across the bridge of her nose and additional bruises on both arms. "He deserves it. I hope he rots in jail", she says. She launches into an invocation regarding men like her boyfriend; situations like her own: "I'd like to tell any other woman who is living with this [censored] will go on and on 'til eventually you'll either go to jail for killin' the guy or he'll kill you."

Officer Bob Dorigo reflects as he exits the grounds of the garden apartments. "It is really impressive that she came forward and blew the whistle on this guy. I mean, he was there handing me that crap about how things are done in his country...it's good for him to find out he is here now, and that behavior is unacceptable." His caucasian partner saunters beside him, a blonde with a paunch and (of course) a bottle-brush mustache. The cautionary lyric of the reggae tune "Bad Boys, Bad Boys, whatcha gonna do..." plays as the footage fades. The commercial is for an upcoming NBC special called "Good Cops".

The speech given by the battered Columbian woman was seemingly adventurous, therefore it was rousing and engaging. But was it really spontaneous-impromptu, as it were? In determining whether it was or not, we are merely determining two shadings of the same exploitation. To begin with, the woman's mental and physical privacy has been compromised and trivialized by the camera-a technological, technocratic voyeur. Millions of viewers are made privy to the lay-out of her living quarters through TV's shabby, truncated vision of aesthetics. There are many dangers in this, not the least of which is that the short-sighted, ignorant sorts will have little concern for her bruises but much for the way she keeps house. In this sense, the camera becomes a brute arbiter of class distinctions and sometimes, racial equivocations. It is a conceivable that white working or middle-class viewers would draw prejudicial conclusions from such scant information-predominantly visual, at that. The nature of visual "information" is such that it abjures rational judgement in favor of the titillating, the tawdry, the obfuscating. It is far less the concern of a program like *Cops* to depict a battered working-class woman seeking justice for the abuse she has suffered, than it is to simply show a battered working-class woman. *Cops* does not address itself to those who are outraged by what repression and inequality lead to, but to those who just like to ogle the misfortunes of others. In the end it is not the Columbian woman who is heroic, either for the cogency of her speech or the atrocity of her scars, but the police, the noble Knights in Blue on the tube, and Rodney King but a real-life apparition.

-J. Donnelly



# Poll Tax Rebellion

Reviewed by John Zerzan

*Poll Tax Rebellion* by Danny Burns (AK Press, 3 Balmoral Place, Stirling, FK8 2RD, Scotland; and Attack International, BM 6577, London WC1N 3XX, England, 1992) 202pp. \$12.00 [postpaid] paper.

Throughout the '80s the reactionary policies of the Conservative Party, headed by Margaret Thatcher, reigned in Britain. Retrenchment was the order of the day and the average person was forced to bear a large burden of sacrifice for the benefit of a declining British capitalism. Toward the end of the decade, in Thatcher's third term of office, the Tories redoubled their squeeze on the mass of the population by announcing a flat tax, in which all, rich or poor, would be forced to pay equally. This grossly regressive tax, which was to take effect beginning in 1989 and 1990, was quickly dubbed the Poll Tax due to its likeness to a head tax introduced in 1381. The right wing of capital, seriously overreaching itself, should have heeded the parallel. 600 years earlier the levy provoked a peasant revolt of epic proportions.

Burns' story of the campaign of popular resistance to the poll tax is accessible, well-organized, and accentuated with scores of photos and other graphic illustrations. Written as "a tribute to a mass movement which defied the state and won," it is a field study of how that movement progressed, by one of its organizers. As such, it must be said that it embodies some of the biases of an organizer.

A rising current of hostility to the tax and outright refusal to pay found marvelous expression in Trafalgar Square on Easter Sunday, 1990. On that sunny day, 200,000 formed a protest march to the center of London, culminating in a full scale battle with authority. The cops were routed (542 police injuries), the Square liberated, and considerable looting of posh stores throughout the West End accomplished. This was the high point of the developing resistance, and as Burns points out, the number of local anti-Poll Tax groups trebled within weeks of the Easter explosion; within a year Thatcher had resigned, and the projected tax had been withdrawn. And yet the book minimizes the occasion, betraying, I'm afraid, the all-too-typical leftist organizer's fear of spontaneity and triumphant "excess." Instead of glorying in what transpired, the author mainly points to certain cases of police violence, as if this popular outpouring needed to be excused or justified by reference to improper police conduct.

It is also possible to see Burns' account of the long campaign of organized resistance to the Poll Tax as introducing a basic question or two about the role of organizing. For one thing, it may be well to remember that the hated tax was not defeated by building up formal organizations across Scotland, Wales, and England, but by non-payment. The latter was not necessarily a simple effect of the former. In fact, as the author admits, "it was sometimes in the places where the anti-Poll Tax Unions were

weakest that resistance was strongest," such as certain inner city areas that had none at all.

Organization itself may even be subject to examination. Burns speaks of the challenge to find ways to keep ordinary people involved, to make them feel as if they were being effective and making decisions (p.191). Issues of manipulation and lack of transparency arise, especially when it is remembered that Burns and his comrades are committed leftists. When he refers to "building on the success of this campaign," one is reminded of the larger agenda in mind, unlikely to have been fully disclosed to those ordinary people being organized.

My own bias lies with critique, as thorough and public as possible, but it is impossible not to also accord at least critical respect to those, like Burns, who struggled for years against the threat of a severely onerous tax scheme in the U.K.

## The Transparent Society

Reviewed by John Zerzan

*The Transparent Society* by Gianni Vattimo (Johns Hopkins University Press, 701 W. 40th St., Baltimore, MD. 21211, 1992) 129pp. \$12.95 paper/\$32.50 hardcover.

Vattimo, a professor of philosophy at Turin University, celebrates the ascendancy of mass media and industrial culture. This ascendancy is not a degeneration, he insists; rather it represents a "fateful opportunity" to realize a transparent society. High-tech mass culture is also the essence of the postmodern condition, in his valuation.

Contrary to Adorno and others, "standardization, uniformity, the manipulation of consensus" etc. "are not the only possible outcome of the advent of generalized communication, the mass media and reproduction." In this asser-

tion Vattimo enlists the crude marxism of Walter Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," which claims that technology offers a rejuvenation of the aesthetic experience. He also attempts to bring Heidegger to his aid, by means of thoroughly "updating" the only important insight Heidegger offers. If the latter tended to see modernity as universal technological domination, Vattimo says that the newest advances of technics have begun to usher in a new day.

"It is not in the world of machines and engines that humanity and being can shed the mantles of subject and object, but in the world of generalized communication." You see, computers have somehow changed everything, as if the "generalized communication" is not a direct expression of the horrible "machines and engines" he'd like to forget.

Earlier in the book Vattimo explains, in a most telling passage, how this wonderful qualitative leap can be understood:

"The technology that shapes the world we live in is indeed made up of machines, in the traditional sense of the word, which provide us with the means to 'dominate' external nature. But it is primarily and essentially defined by systems collecting and transmitting information."

One quickly sees the advantage of getting rid of technology "in the traditional sense of the word" and disposing of the rampant destruction of the natural world by putting the word *dominate* in quotes. Also to employ the word *information* in such a sanguine and innocent way, forgetting the erasure of meaning that defines its contemporary use.

As if there were no Adorno, no Ellul, no sickening of the planet and the psyches inhabiting it, our postmodern professor assures us that it is only the possible "wrongful application" of technical advances that should cause us worry. Much like a spokesperson for Exxon or Union Carbide: all is basically well and getting better via technology.

Faithful to the guiding, anti-critical spirit of his philosophy, Vattimo urges us to embrace the dance of death that is visible to all. We must "be faithful to the modern legacy of disenchantment," to its inevitable unfolding in the age of mass media. His contribution at least does us the favor of spelling out, with shocking transparency, the postmodern spirit.





# Alternative press books

Short reviews by J. McQuinn

## I, Claudia

*I, Claudia: Feminism Unveiled* by Claudia (BM Claudia, London WC1N 3XX, England, 1993) 60pp. booklet \$6.50 (including p&h directly from the publisher by airmail).

*The Rebel's New Clothes* by Claudia (BM Claudia, London WC1N 3XX, England, 1992) 36pp. booklet \$5.25 (or \$5.00 cash/£3.25 IMO from the publisher incl. p&h).

These two booklets can only be inspiring for those who take their rebellion seriously. For poseurs, ideologues and self-identified victims, the messages they relate may well be painful to read. The author, Claudia, refuses to hide behind or take any comfort in the usual illusions of feminism, leftism or anarchism. For this she will surely be condemned by all who feel they require the ideological props of groupthink to sustain their fragile egos in the highly competitive PC-identity market.

*I, Claudia: Feminism Unveiled* is a newly revised and combined reprinting of Claudia's first two pamphlets (*I, Claudia* and *Love Lies Bleeding*), both of which mount a sustained attack on feminism for its messages (hopelessness, passivity, prudery), its hypocrisies (lesbian-identified feminists with hidden boyfriends, etc.), and its class basis (most often college-educated middle and upper class women who do not shrink from exploiting lower class working women). In the essays that make up this reprinted collection Claudia highlights the myths of romantic love and self-sacrifice that underpin domestic violence, explores the economic components of gender relationships which are almost universally ignored or denied, emphasizes the controlling functions of feminist theory and practice, and exposes the conservative aims of feminist activism and scholarship. She does all this largely through anecdotal accounts of both her own and others' personal experiences, making her presentation entertaining as well as illuminating. She also has a knack for creatively confrontational formulations: "...feminists wear their politics as armour against criticism." "Romantic love is the delusion that intimacy with another will act as an antidote to personal malaise." "It is far easier to fulminate against half the human race than to examine one's own motives for tolerating ill-treatment." "Our society may be ruled with the ultimate sanction of force but its day-to-day operation is carried out by a population industriously engaged in forging its own chains."

The essays that make up *The Rebel's New Clothes*—Claudia's latest collection—extend these criticisms into related Trotskyist, anarchist, squatting and pacifist milieus, where moralism often substitutes for theory and maintenance of a coherent role is always more

important than any ostensible social or political goals.

Unfortunately, whatever validity radical theory and practice can attain in reality is almost entirely lost in the face of the general, corrosive cynicism with which Claudia (accurately) confronts all the false pretenses and empty myths of contemporary "rebels." But given the massive illusions of our time, this type of critical house-cleaning of the radical milieu is undoubtedly vastly more important than any "positive" theoretical contributions could be. If only more of us were willing to be so cruel with our own pet reifications, our times might become a bit more interesting. -J.M.

## Two Lies that Shook the World

*Two Lies that Shook the World* (Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX, England, undated) 21pp. pamphlet, no price given.

The two lies referred to in the title of this pamphlet are those of the infamous Russian forgery titled *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the lesser known, but equally pernicious, decree of "The Nationalization of Women." Both would merely be laughable if they had not been taken as gospel truth by thousands of gullible reactionaries, and led to tragic consequences in many situations.

*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was originally conceived as an anti-Jewish (as in the Jewish religion) tract, based on an earlier literary satire written to discredit Napoleon III of France. It was used to marshal the credulous into participation or toleration of harassment, attacks and pogroms against the Jewish population in Russia marshalled by Orthodox Christian, Tsarist and other counter-revolutionary forces. Later versions of the *Protocols* were circulated with strictly anti-semitic (racist) intent.

*The Nationalization of Women* decree was formally modelled on other Soviet decrees and originally distributed in the Russian city of Saratov. It declared that the "private ownership" of women would end and that women would become "the property of the people" (meaning working men). The decree was actually issued by Mikhail Uvarov, a member of the Union of Russian People, a right-wing organization. However, it specified that the decree would be put into effect by the Saratov Anarchist's club, which led to the sacking of the club by a mob of irate women who didn't understand that it was all a hoax. The author of the forgery was found, shot and killed as "an act of vengeance and just protest" by some of the anarchist victims of the hoax. Later the decree was reprinted in newspapers across the Soviet

Union for a variety of reasons—from anti-anarchist or anti-Bolshevik, to pure humor—eventually becoming a standard anti-Bolshevik libel, which even found its way into the testimony given at an official U.S. Senate Commission's hearings in 1919, as well as being printed in full in its minutes.

*Two Lies that Shook the World* is a short, entertaining (and unfortunately somewhat incomplete) description of these two hoaxes worth reading for those like me who had never been exposed to some of the historical details of their conception, distribution and results. -J.M.

## Other titles received

*Free Love: 38 Essays in Libido Liberation* by S. Colman (Dawn Press, POB 02936, Detroit, WI. 48202, 1987) 245pp. \$19.95 8½x11 photocopied.

*The Trial of Gilles de Rais* by George Bataille (Amok Books, POB 861867 Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, CA. 90086-1867, 1991) 279pp. \$12.95 paper.

*L'Unique et sa Propriété* by Max Stirner (Édition du Libéraire, 25 rue Dumé d'Aplemont, 76600 Le Havre, France, 1993) 38pp. pamphlet, no price listed.

*Ex Jugoslavia: Terrorismo di Stato* by Gruppo Anarchico Germinal di Trieste (Edizioni BFS, Biblioteca Franco Serantini, CP 247, 56100 Pisa, Italy, 1993) 60pp. 5,000 Lire pamphlet.

*The Scorpion's Dark Dance* by Alfredo de Palchi, translated by Sonia Raiziss (Xenos Books, Box 52152, Riverside, CA 92517, 1993) 130pp. \$9.95 paper.

*L'Ennemi, C'est l'Homme* by Bertrand Louart (Bertrand Louart, 6 place Jean de la Taille, 45300 Pithiviers, France, 1993) 24pp. pamphlet, no price listed.

*The Global Arms Trade* by Gary McCuen (McCuen Publications, Inc., 502 Second St., Hudson, WI. 54016, 1992) 128pp. hardcover no price given.

*Poison in the Wind* by Gary McCuen (McCuen Publications, Inc., 502 Second St., Hudson, WI. 54016, 1992) 144pp. hardcover no price given.

*Street Lives* by Steven Vanderstaay (New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA. 19143, 1992) 240pp. \$14.95 paper.

*Addicted to War* by Joel Andreas (New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA. 19143, 1993) 64pp. no price given 8½x11 paper.



# Anarchy in the Mendocino Forest

The West Coast Anarchist Campout in the Mendocino National Forest on Sept. 17-19 was attended by 70 or 80 or so anarchists at an overlook of Clear Lake in Northern California. The site was a bit far out and hard to find, but was quite beautiful and there were none of the usual anarchist gathering problems with cops and nearby residents. Although the site was very popular with hunter thugs who seemed to be shooting in every direction around the campsite.

I was a bit worried by some of the information regarding the gathering that I received in the mail thinking it might be an overly serious gathering of political organizing and networking, and that perhaps a vision of what we're organizing for, new, inspiring ideas regarding actions and also playful fun and tomfoolery in the forest might be left out. This was not the case. The gathering was made up of many seasoned activists involved with many various struggles that were hungry for meeting new people, trying new things, and working together to create a freer happier world for the whole mess of us.

Fabulous, free food was provided from Food Not Bombs! folks from all over and most everyone participated in cooking it as rumour circled the camp that the tub of guacamole that was particularly addictive and most yummy was laced with acid. On the first evening we were put into a trance-like state banging on drums and cowbells until nearby bears came over to tell us to "quiet it down" 'cause we were waking up the forest. None of the deer or squirrels called the authorities however.

We broke up into men's and women's groups on Saturday. The men's group that I participated in I believe was a first for all those that attended. We discussed sexist attitudes, but barely mentioned our own personal sexist attitudes. Robert Bly was roundly denounced. The discussion was a bit too theoretical, like "what should we do when someone makes a sexist comment?" Some personal stories and problems were related including rejecting or accepting pornography, our extreme attraction for women's bodies and good looks, and also usually unmentioned economic responsibilities placed on men even in radical circles such as women still expecting to be supported financially even though they're involved with a poor anarchist who can hardly support himself. I was inspired to organize men's meetings when the women break off and do their thing at future gatherings. Thankfully the issue of separatism was not brought up for the umpteenth time. From what I've heard women seem to get a hell of a lot out of these meetings and they are often revolutionary as far as disclosing personal horror stories before a group, finding out that you're not alone, that many women have gone through what you have and can provide solidarity.

I did a workshop on masturbation as we hiked to the sunset over Clear Lake. First times, weird places, lubricant, sex police parents and teachers, a few tips and boners in school were discussed and turned into a discussion of

sexual liberation through masturbation or otherwise. Most agreed that while sex might be preferable, that you don't often have bad spanking the bunny sessions and that a healthy combination of both was a must. We also discussed other things that got us off like beautiful sunsets or bass guitars. I noticed that the talk gave a lot of people a sort of worked up, horny look about them.

The organizing and networking workshops were a bit tiring, but necessary. There was a time when I was 18 and thought I was the only person who shared my beliefs in the whole L.A. area. The anarchists in Southern and Northern CA are very organized. There are infoshops in Berkeley, Santa Cruz, and Arcata as well as one that we're attempting to put together in L.A. There are Food Not Bombs! organizations everywhere providing food more and more regularly and in San Francisco and Santa Cruz being jailed regularly for it. People seemed to think that very little was accomplished at the Portland and Vancouver gatherings over the summer. People had very little to say that was positive about Love and Rage, and only three people were interested in having a workshop on it at the general meeting. Who came up with the term "workshop" and how did it stick? How about "discussion" or "grouptalk" or anything that doesn't remind me of high school or menial labor. Future gatherings were discussed in great length, in such great length that I didn't stick around to find out what they decided. A lot of computer nerd anarchists were dying to get us all to more quickly network by e-mail, but I still see nothing revolutionary about star-

ing at a computer screen, and can handle waiting a few days to get a letter in the mail, when I can't afford the new technology on the market that when properly realized will destroy the government. Not. Cyberpuke.

The best discussion I attended was Ander's political assassination and violence talk around a late night campfire. I couldn't be any less interested in the violence/non-violence debate and thankfully most people agreed that it would depend on the particular incident when and if violence is justified. There were no devout pacifists among us so we went on to debate effective and ineffective violent tactics used by the Black Panthers, AIM, SLA, the Weathermen, the Branch Davidians and during the L.A. riots, and also alternatives to violence. A black woman discussed the entrenched, extreme violence of her community and wondered how so many in the group could discuss violence theoretically. I brought up that we'd all been involved in violent incidents in protests and riots and we went on to discuss our more personal experiences. No one could think of any violent act they'd participated in that they later regretted. This was a damn good discussion that kept everyone's mind reeling and kept people arguing to well after midnight.

Max did a Chumbawamba Karaoke and Sandcastle Building discussion up in some thick, sap covered pine trees. The amoeba, a group of people wrapped in a huddle like position making monster noises and swallowing up unsuspecting innocents premiered at the gathering and was suggested for future demo tactics, but it was eaten by a larger amoeba.

## The anarchist scene

Compiled by Jason McQuinn

OZARK SUMMER '94 will be a "gathering for a summer of community building, personal development and political change...in support of ongoing local grassroots struggles." For Information contact: Ozark Summer '94, 313 N. 8th St., Columbia, MO. 65201; or 314-449-3857.

PERENNIAL BOOKS (POB B14, Montague, MA. 01351) has released the fifth edition of its thick and very worthwhile "Catalog of Anarchist Books, Journals & Essays," including sections on Theory, History/Bibliography, Classics, Literature/Art, and Autonomedia/Semiotext[e], along with a final section on Journals and Magazines.

THE DIRECT ACTION MANUAL PROJECT based in San Francisco (and announced in past issues of *Anarchy* and other anarchist periodicals) has folded due to insufficient participation.

AUTONOMOUS OCTOPUS, 370 Marie-Anne East, in Montréal, is open 7 days a week from 1 to 9 with collective meetings on Sunday's at 3PM. The space has a free kitchen, a food and clothes depot, library, and features speakers and musical events. We need back issues of anti-authoritarian journals for our library and literature to give out in our free section. Phone: [514] 843-4528.

CROATAN IS A NEW COLLECTIVE SPACE opening at 1237 Hollins St., Baltimore, MD. 21223 which aims to "amass information concerning radical and autonomous projects throughout the world," to "establish a center for the bartering of goods and labor," and to become the center for other projects.

LOOMPANICS UNLIMITED (POB 1197, Port Townsend, WA. 98368) has released a new 280-page 1994 *Main Catalog*, along with a 24-page 1994 *Spring Supplement* that, as always are worth checking out for at least a few of their offerings. Copies of the *Main Catalog* are available for \$5.

COLLECTIVE ACTION (POB 22962, Baltimore, MD. 21203) has reprinted two pamphlets, *The New Movement* by Henri Simon (first published in English by Solidarity) and *The Maryland Freedom Union* (first published by News & Letters in 1966).

If you have announcements concerning anarchist gatherings, new publications, or other anarchist activities or projects which our readers might find of use, you can send them to: Attn. Anarchist Scene, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446.



Some people said this chaotic, cretinous animal was the highlight of the gathering. Others remarked that there could have been more playful silliness. I'd hoped we'd be attacked by bears, but no luck. The Wingnuts who organized the campout did a fine job and hopefully more people will be attracted to the next one. After the gathering it occurred to me that a goal of the anarchists in their various areas might be to somehow go about acquiring rent-free land and property and turning it into gardens, info shops, living quarters and entertainment spaces and start building autonomous zones with security in every city. Big dreams. -Adam Bregman

## Guerrilla Information Warfare

On October 5, 1993, an Associated Press wire-service story flashed across the U.S. media: a group of unknown "guerilla artists" or "information terrorists" have sabotaged a number of New York City traffic signals so that the pedestrian crosswalk lights spell out strange alternative messages instead of the traditional "WALK/DON'T WALK".

A mid-town Manhattan light flashes "CONFORM/CONSUME" to the hordes that pack the streets, while one near the Cathedral of St. John the Divine now says "Repent/Sin". Another in Greenwich Village waxes philosophical with alternating messages of "WHY" and "WHY NOT TRY?"

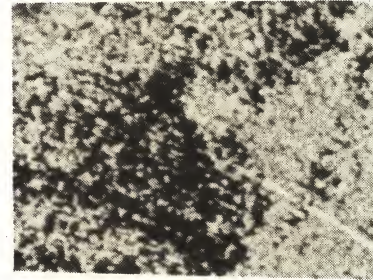
The A.P. article helpfully spells out the methods the new guerrillas are using in this new and exciting form of subversive counter-conditioning. First, the participant climbs the light-pole; then the metal grille that covers the signal light is removed by extracting a few screws, and the colored plastic lens is removed. Inside, there is a stencil cut-out with the "WALK" or "DON'T WALK" message lettered on it; this is removed and another stencil is inserted. The screws are replaced, and, voila! a subliminal wake-up signal is flashed to the entranced masses.

As with the more traditional types of guerilla information warfare, like billboard revision, graffiti, poster, etc., the sport of signal-light editing is most effective as a team effort. One pole climber and two lookouts with whistles is a good arrangement.

Ideas for new signal light slogans immediately flood the minds of aspiring info-warriors who contemplate this new art form. The challenge is to express the maximum amount of psycho-catalytic impact with the minimum number of letters. To those of meditative inclination, the signal light message may be interpreted as a sort of two-word haiku based on the bi-polar Yin/Yang concept, where complementary opposites formulate the holistic Tao. In this connection, a "Yin/Yang" signal would be interesting. However, more linear-rational westerners might be more inclined to invoke the tenor of the times with a "SUBMIT/RESIST" signal. Of course, other

artists will have other moods and modes of expression; thus, an Existentialist might program a signal to read "SEX/DEATH", while a Dada/Surrealist might go for "GOD/DOG".

It is probably only a matter of time before the Guardians of the State contrive counter-measures to prevent signal alteration, so inspiring info-guerrillas who would like to get a word in should "strike while the iron is hot", as it were. They should also bear in mind that this form of creative civil disobedience will tend to



arouse the ire of the constabulary, so it would be wise to remember the Boy Scout Motto and "be prepared".

This tactic appears to be part of an emerging, yet nameless, neo-psychedelic post-punk culture mutation of the 1990s, a generational renaissance/resurrection that many are calling the pendulum-swing of the 1960s. This innovative technique provides a tantalizing foretaste of the creative acts of resistance that a generation of high-tech social-revolutionary hackers, cyber-pirates and info-guerrillas will wage against the State/Corporate information monopoly and its all-pervasive web of hypnotic slave-conditioning.

Every mind jarred momentarily awake is a spark of public illumination and a blow struck against the empire whose law is psychic enslavement of the masses for the profit of a tiny ruling class. -Dale R. Gowin

## Revolutionary Shoplifters

In late 1992 six people bored with consensus reality met in a Carbondale safehouse to plan disruptive acts. After some brainstorming our target became clear: the bastion of consumer culture, the University Mall.

We designed T-shirts that read "I am a shoplifter" and "RSA", the initials of the Revolutionary Shoplifting Army, in bold letters. We wore hats, dark glasses, gloves and carried shopping bags filled with rubbish to confuse the mall security and other interested parties. We wanted to unleash a playful subversion upon the regular patterns of spectacular consumption and push things as far as we could before we were thrown out.

When we arrived we were immediately disruptive simply by our appearance. We began to play and sing and chant, at one point marching in mock cadence to the rhythm of "five finger

discount" and "all the way with the RSA." We acted like we were dropping items into our bags and ran about, encouraging people to steal. It was great fun to cut loose in such a controlled environment. We called each other code names like Lefty, Fingers, etc.

A highlight of our tour was Victoria's Secrets lingerie shop. A woman working there seemed eager to engage in some interaction that was out of the ordinary and was real friendly. Amazingly, with no security guards in sight, we made the rounds and had a nice time in the Foot Locker. When one of our members was explaining to a worker what we were doing, a comrade and I approached and started doing jumping jacks. It was difficult to keep a straight face during such lunacy. We soon moved on only to encounter a female security guard who stopped us, and seeming surprised and confused, inquired as to just what the hell we thought we were doing. She called another guard on her walkie-talkie who, upon arrival and after looking us over, said "This isn't funny!" We pointed out that she was smiling and we all laughed together. Even the security guards. Our humorous tactics revealed the truth and at that moment there was no hierarchically induced separation between us.

But the mood soured when some less than conciliatory remarks and he was threatened with excommunication from the mall. We patched things up, and after telling us not to bother the shoppers they let us go on our merry way.

After more fun, a few photographs and lots of funny looks and smiles from shoppers and employees, we descended on Walgreens because it had lots of small items and many aisles in which to play. Uh-oh! Here comes a security guard looking very displeased, a white male with a confederate flag pinned to his uniform. He was very stern and requested that we get together so he could talk to us. He said a shopper had complained, and indeed, I found that there had been a rude remark directed at a shopper by a comrade in response to some situation I know little of. It was disappointing, and for me, less than desirable to create that kind of interaction. But we had a lively discussion with the guard- the head of mall security- and touched on topics like consumerism, capitalism, the nature of malls, and of course, shoplifting. He seemed unable to grasp the nature of our activity. At one point he asked if we were doing a fraternity prank. I told him he could follow us around if he had nothing to do and received a sharp negative response. Surprisingly, he didn't escort us out but did warn us that he would call the Carbondale police if there were any more problems. Having most of the wind knocked out of our sails by these encounters, we left shortly after in a dramatic mad dash for the doors.

Hopefully some others were able to engage in "proletarian shopping" while we created our diversion. Despite one or two negative aspects it was an empowering and humorous experience. We plan on returning to the mall and other select institutions either as the RSA, mud people or streakers. We encourage the formation of other RSA chapters around the world, and highly recommend the unleashing of the insurgent imagination in all official temples of consumption. -Mary Mary



## NEITHER EAST NOR WEST NETWORK FORMING

(As we've written this history keeps shifting. No matter, the integrity of our proposal remains intact. This is as of 3-30-94. For those unfamiliar with us you can send a \$1 for info—address below)

**"Hitler came to power when the conditions in Germany were like they are now in Russia. The conditions for someone ultra-right to come to power now are here." —Vladimir Zhirinovsky**

Neither East Nor West-NYC (NENW-NYC), around since '86 and with predecessor groups since '80, who networks alternative oppositions in east and west for mutual solidarity, is calling for the formation of a continental network. This is in response to our growth, the growing interest in us, and dangerous reversals in Russia. (Previously was the North American East/West Network launched in '88 and which faded sometime later.)

In a bit over a year we've tripled (to 20) the amount of people working locally with us who if not regularly coming to meetings are involved in other support work. Our *On Gogol Boulevard News Service*, carrying alternative news mostly from the east, now has regular sections in *Fifth Estate*, *Anarchy*, Mexico's *Amor Y Rabia*, and a *de facto* section with much of our news in Canada's *Kick It Over's* "Global Village" pages. We had a one shot section in *Profane Existence*, and offers from other publications like *Black Fist* who'll run a section. We'll be in the e-mail Internet universe in the near future. We do regular mailings of many of the above to 170 of our key international contacts. We also include other timely items like the Polish Anarchist Federation's *News From Poland, Love and Rage*, petitions, etc. For the past year we've been busy with many things such as: an international campaign (along with the Workers Solidarity Alliance) for Nigeria's anarchist Awareness League prisoners; solidarity with repressed workers in Belarus; support for Polish draft resisters; the twinning and support of anti-racist/fascist organizing in Chattanooga with similar and anti-war work in Serbia's "Zitser Spiritual Republic" (we're their "U.S. Embassy!"); and we joined and work with the Network of East/West Women, among many other projects.

A number of people and groups across the country have asked to be involved with us, so we think it's time to launch a network.

We believe a counterweight is needed against those western radicals (including many

anarchists) who have blinders on vis-a-vis the East wrongly treating Soviet-type systems as over, or at best secondary concerns. This is apparent for instance in the way one U.S. anarchist network deleted mention of Soviet (Russian) imperialism in their statement of principles (way too early as Russian imperialism is reasserting itself in many of the former republics of the Russian empire—we promise a future article). A second example is another U.S. anarchist group (newly formed with a large circulation newspaper) who in their political statement seriously claim that "The United States is an imperial power unmatched by any in the twentieth century..." implying the rehashing of left chauvinist dogma that imperialism is only a creature of the west and capitalism (neglecting simple history) and turning a blind eye to the utter vastness of the Tsarist or Soviet *literal* empire (neglecting simple geography) which is on the remake (neglecting current events).

**Our work remains valid because (see *Anarchy* Fall '93 for a much fuller examination of this):**

1. With all we've accomplished (a lot), it'd be dumb to just walk away from it.

2. To the extent that ex-Communist countries are trying to mimic western ones is to the extent that eastern and western problems are becoming similar—that gives us even more of a reason for being and a more exact shared community of interest. A most obvious nexus of shared east, west, and third world problems is the austerity being imposed everywhere with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund being the central enforcers. (The same financial/corporate/state milieu enforces in the western countries. The IMF/World Bank throw their opinion and weight around in the west additionally.)

3. Communism is *not over* as a phenomena. (China etc. The former has by no means gone capitalist/western.) Important remnants in all degrees remain in all the ex-nations. The special needs of those in such situations is unchanged. Other "Shining Paths" could spring up.

4. "East vs. west," "Russia vs. the U.S.," "Nuclear war/WW3," it's way too early to call it over. The rift between Russia and the west is front page news now. Russia has said "no" to the idea of central/eastern European countries joining NATO, and the west has heeded this. It's "former" Communists—now present day leaders of Serbia and Croatia, Milosevich and Tudjman—who are mainly responsible for the war in the middle of Europe, in ex-Yugoslavia. NATO and Russia are on opposite sides of this with Russia siding with Serbian imperialism. As of this writing things have chilled somewhat in Bosnia due to NATO threats and Western and Russian Yalta-type brokered agreements leaving Bosnia broken up into Russian and western zones of influence, leaving Serbian conquests intact. Nonetheless, this is one of the most explosive flashpoints—among plenty in Europe and the ex-U.S.S.R.—that could blow into world war.

All parts of the political spectrum are predicting as a strong possibility the return of open dictatorship in Russia and renewed violent Russian expansionism. (After Yeltsin's Oct. '93 crushing of the Parliament the military junked

the promise of massive troop reduction and announced "a new military doctrine" proclaiming the right to intervene in what they're calling "the near abroad.") It could be headed by Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Russia's "nazi," who's supported by Russia's not inconsequential "red/brown" Communist/fascist alliance. (The KGB helped set up opposition parties beholden to them to retain influence, one of which was Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party. Before entering politics Zhirinovsky held exclusively KGB-related positions or posts controlled by the Communist Party apparatus.) He's openly in favor of expansionism and war, promising for instance 300,000 troops for Serbia. A contest between him and the west will make the cold war look idyllic—especially if the west is led by Clinton or a similar U.S. Democrat having to prove themselves, or else an Oliver North or Colin Powell (yes, both are strong contenders for the next U.S. presidency—they could also be on a joint ticket).

East and west nukes remain intact...

If the above (worst case) scenario comes into play, what will the "left" do? (The bulk of the left's silly U.S. "peace movement," almost entirely Soviet influenced or controlled [literally—the book is yet to be written] has folded. We're still here...) Much of the left will treat it as a WW2-type situation with Zhirinovsky as Hitler, necessitating leftists to get behind U.S. militarism. But again, we'll still be here as a real alternative.

Even without Zhirinovsky or someone similar, with the supposedly "moderate" Yeltsin (on very thin ice now with little support), or even a "centrist," Russia is extremely unstable with its rebellious ethnic republics (21) and territories therein (88) and an overly complicated monolith of an economy continuing to come apart, plus a parliament and president in opposition. The ex-U.S.S.R. never totally shed its repressive apparatus and Yeltsin has increased authoritarian rule. Russia is reasserting colonial control again in the former Soviet republics. The economy is in a free fall with production dropping to 60% between '90-'93. Enterprises continue to shut with nothing productive taking their place—there's only non-producing increased trade, much self-cannibalistic, many people on the street are selling everything they own (in one famed photo a woman is selling her freshly cut pony tail)—and parasitic speculative practices and swindling (a giant mafia) all grafted onto the pre-existing state-command system. Unemployment and inflation (2600% from '90-'93) continue to spiral. There is mass impoverishment with no let up in sight—90% of workers earn less than the official subsistence wage. And in the absence of a serious working class opposition, it can only remain that way—and get worse. What's normally predicted to possibly follow such a situation is violent dictatorship and war. If so, the regime will be a terrifying fusion of nazism/Stalinism and Russian nationalism.

Lookout...

5. Regardless of future developments in the ex-Soviet bloc and remaining Communist countries, they constitute half the world and we're well situated to deal with it.

6. The soviet-type system—actual, in transition to capitalism, or future (?)—is a mode of production as different from capitalism as is

On Gogol Boulevard (OGB) is the bulletin of New York City Neither East Nor West, networking East and West alternative oppositions and printing news and documents unavailable in the corporate or "left" media. We also bring Third and Fourth World activists into these efforts.

This regular OGB section in *Anarchy* will serve the same function. We encourage all those involved in "Neither East Nor West" type activity to regularly contribute to this section. Please address letters, reports, documents, debates, graphics, photos, etc. directly to OGB. This is not a section for anarchists only. We are interested in all things promoting freedom, such as workers', women's, minority, and gay rights, environmental and anti-militarist issues, and anything pursuing paths other than the capitalist and state bureaucratic models.

By the way, Gogol Boulevard is a noted hang-out for Moscow's counter-culture—see you there!

On Gogol Boulevard/Neither East Nor West  
528 Fifth Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215 (718) 499-7720





Anti-war vets march against the Republican National Convention during the Vietnam War.

feudalism, and deserves its own special consideration.

## WHAT WE PROPOSE

A. That we call ourselves The Neither East Nor West Network. (Any local group/individual can take on the NENW name with reference to their own locale (i.e., Mexico City-NENW) as others have done in the past or are continuing to do so in the present.)

B. That for now we confine it to North America for simplicity and consolidation.

C. The purpose of the Network is to coordinate east/west activities, such as circulating a petition for the release of Lithuanian anarchist political prisoners (yes, they exist). It's meant to supplement, not replace, already existing activity.

D. NENW-NYC volunteers to be the mailing address and volunteers to periodically mail out updated Network contact lists. We'll also cover relevant Network activities in *On Gogol Boulevard*.

E. Anyone can propose something. It's up to them to circulate their proposal to the Network, coordinate it, and inform us all as to its progress. If the Network would like to get more formal and have its own bulletin, continental meetings etc., again anyone is free to volunteer to suggest it or initiate it.

Just a couple/few simple campaigns a year is sufficient. We all have plenty of other things to do already.

F. To not over extend ourselves let's basically confine our activities to the realm of east/west, and that includes, since we are bilateral, proposals to easterners, say for the release of a U.S. political prisoner. Easterners can't be overloaded with too many campaigns either.

Obviously the connections we've made with something non-eastern, like Nigeria's anarchist Awareness League, should continue. NENW-

NYC has always been open to anything, but we believe it's important to keep the specialty of east/west.

G. The Network is open to anyone truly in opposition to both east & west systems. Though traditionally it's been mostly anarchists attracted to NENW-type activity, there's no reason to be exclusionary. (Leninists of course shouldn't even think of trying to get involved.)

H. *This is a working, not paper, Network. Those joining are expected to be part of it.* Otherwise it has no reason for being.

That's it. Very simple. It may or may not fly. The prior North American East/West Network died because too many who signed on didn't do shit. We're serious about this—**PLEASE DO NOT SIGN ON UNLESS YOU'RE GOING TO BE PART OF IT.**

If our proposal is acceptable let us know ASAP. If not, likewise let us know ASAP so we can notify others interested as to the objections/suggestions and let's see what can be worked out.

Send in yays, nays, comments, whatever to us and if and when something coherent and agreeable takes shape we'll immediately send out the Network contact list (and no doubt a proposal).

Please include your phone # too.

Over and Out,

Neither East Nor West-NYC, 528 5th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215, U.S., 718-499-7720

## ON LIFTING THE TRADE EMBARGO AGAINST VIET NAM

By the Clarence Fitch Chapter of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (the New York/New Jersey branch of VVAW—Clarence Fitch was a dedicated member of the branch who has passed away)

We believe that the United States war in Indochina was a turning point in American history. We believe that the conduct of that war

exposed to us and to the American people the contradictions and hypocrisies which lie at the very foundations of American foreign and domestic policies. We believe that the failure to understand and clarify these true lessons of the American experience in Indochina continues to fester in the American body politic. This failure has led directly to such dishonorable and disgraceful episodes and activities as: an embargo which punished the Vietnamese people for successfully defending their homeland, and which prohibited American scientists and veterans from studying the health effects of exposure to herbicides which afflict so many of our own brothers and sisters; our government's political and military support for the genocidal Khmer Rouge in Cambodia [OGB note: *During the Indochina War (what the Vietnamese call the American War) the U.S. terror-bombed Cambodia, murdering 1/6 of the peasantry. This helped drive the peasantry into the arms of Pol Pot forces.*]; and the long cruel hoax on the families of the Americans missing in action played by our government and by unscrupulous POW [prisoner of war] activists. This failure has contributed indirectly to both covert and open U.S. intervention in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, and contributes even now to American policy failures in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia.

We believe that our failure as a nation to come to terms with the American experience in Indochina is a contributing factor in the continuing isolation and alienation of Vietnam veterans. We believe that this alienation represents a failure to reconcile ourselves to the country which enlisted and drafted us, to the people we tried to destroy, and to our own experiences. We believe that one part of this reconciliation process requires that we recognize, understand, help heal and rebuild, and finally forgive the people who became our enemies by fighting for their independence.

We welcome the end of the embargo. We support the complete normalization of relations between our government and the countries of Indochina. We urge generosity in aid for reconstruction, especially funding and logistical support to clean up the deadly artifacts of war we left behind [Land mines, unexploded shells and defoliants. The Pentagon refuses to provide Vietnam with maps of U.S. mine fields. -OGB], which even now maim and kill Vietnamese, some not even conceived when we left Saigon nearly twenty years ago.

We hope that by all this and more we can begin to complete the process of reconciliation. We have already spent half our lives on this journey, and we have a long way to go.

[Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) is a national veterans organization that was founded in 1967 that fought to end the war and supported the Indochinese right to independence. It gave voice to the tremendous amount of resistance to the war among U.S. troops and helped expose systematic U.S. atrocities. It grew to a membership of 30,000, and led much of the anti-war movement. President Nixon included them on his "enemies list" and their leadership was victim of an enormous political trial.

VVAW continues to fight for veterans rights against massive neglect, and continues to fight U.S. military invasions and policy. They are a group by, for, and of veterans and aren't affiliated



ed with any political group or party. -OGBJ  
VVAW, Clarence Fitch Chapter, POB 74,  
Brooklyn, NY 11215, U.S., 718-826-1789  
VVAW National Office, POB 408594, Chicago,  
IL 60640, U.S., 312-327-5756



## THE MYTH OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

I was in Cuba for the first time in my life last April '93. I'm the descendant of Cuban exiles. I couldn't believe I was in the same pueblo (small town) my parents lived in. My two cousins who I stayed with owned one of those classic Chevy's. They drove me around and at one point pulled over to the church my mother used to go to as a child. I left the car and saw these words that were freshly painted on a factory wall across from the church. Those words put chills down my back: "Comandante en Jefe Ordene." The translation is "Commander in Chief Give us your Orders." I saw other billboards and graffiti like "Socialism or Death" around some bus stops. When I saw these writings I really got a feel for the dogmatic atmosphere which I heard exists in Cuba. I was doubly amazed when I returned back to my cousins to see on television a little propaganda about the triumph in Playa Gicon (Bay of Pigs). I was amazed again when for the third time I heard this loud noise. My cousin told me the noise was an alarm signal they were testing to warn Cubans of another Yankee invasion.

The culture in Cuba was rich with their Santeria dances which I thought were exciting along with the language and mannerisms. I was feeling the sense of dignity the revolution has given the people. But along with the good came the machismo which I know exists with Cubans in the U.S. I didn't think it existed in Cuba but my female friends were telling me how the male Cubans would ignore them sometimes when they spoke, and didn't talk to them much and would wink at them aloft. That I found to be a shame—I was told that sexism didn't really exist in Cuba.

They talk about freedom in Cuba, like freedom from colonialism. It's true that Cuba isn't influenced by anyone and is independent. It's also true that in Cuba there isn't a big police presence, but that's because they're in plainclothes. The Cubans can talk about the above type of freedom. Well, so there's a lot of freedoms we can talk about in the U.S. also. Cubans cannot criticize the government or express differences of opinion.

There is always someone who'll be an informant of the government. When you want to talk even in your own home you must be careful the

neighbors aren't listening. This I have experienced. The other freedom I want to talk about is freedom of privacy. There's the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR). This committee has several responsibilities. They have an assigned person to every block who's usually called the block president. Their responsibility is to form social programs for education, health, and child care. The other responsibility, which isn't talked about, is that they keep files on the people of their assigned block. They maintain information that becomes useful for when the authorities need to know the actions of an individual(s).

There was also a slight imbalance of who were representatives in institutions—they were usually white and in charge. I didn't see many black doctors in the hospitals. Women played a role in many institutions, but the majority were men.

*Long live the revolution—but its way must change....*—a Cuban-American anarchist (reachable via NENW-NYC)

For a detailed report on current repression in Cuba and opposition groups send \$3 for *Cuba: Stifling Dissent in the Midst of a Crisis*, to Human Rights Watch/Americas, 485 5th Ave., NY, NY 10017-6104

## CUBAN WANTS CONTACTS

Because of U.S. and Cuban policies it's very hard to contact Cubans. Now we have someone, who after receiving a copy of the anarchist *Love and Rage* newspaper, is asking for letter writers.

Because of the Cuban dictatorship, we ask people to be cool in what you say and what you send. We'd suggest asking him first if he'd like anarchist zines, etc.

David del Pino R., calle: Julio A Mella #53, Reparto flora, Antilla Holguin, Cuba C.P. 82400

## RIGHT TO LIFE GOES EAST

By Lena Holub

The fervor of anti-abortion activism has reached the shores of the former Soviet Union. The Russian style pro-life agenda is a fierce combination of American dollars, and most disturbingly, Russian nationalism.

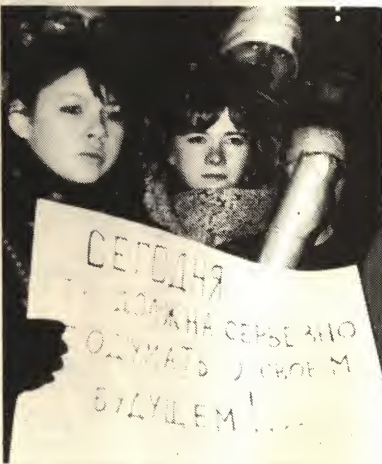
The movement toward nationalistic tendencies, most evident by the recent parliamentary election, is the perfect feeding ground for American anti-abortion groups. "Their ideas about morality and family values—especially as these coincide with a resurgent nationalism that relies on traditional notions of women and the glorification of motherhood—are highly appealing to Russians in flux between discarding an old identity and creating a new one." (Vanden-Hauvel, Katrina; "Eastward Christian Soldiers: Right-to-Lifers Hit Russia", *The Nation*, Nov. 1, 1993.) The largest and most organized of these groups according to Vanden-Hauvel, is the International Right To Life Federation, which staged the three day Right To Life Conference in Moscow last year. It's sole purpose was to make connections with various American Christian rights groups and leaders of the Russian pro-life movement. So successful was this conference that an American group calling itself Focus On The Family (annual budget 77 million dollars!) now broadcasts its pro-life, anti-homosexual rhetoric over 2,500 Russian radio stations.

A prime example of this dangerous combina-

tion of nationalism and the U.S. dollar, is Dr. Igor Guzov, the director of Russia's Support Of Motherhood. He states, "the demographic crisis in our country has grown into demographic catastrophe. We realize that we had to do something to prevent the total depopulation of our country. Entire Russian villages are dying out, while the Muslim population explodes. We need to salvage Russian purity." The support for Dr. Guzov's cause comes straight from American groups such as Human Life International and Chicago's Pro-Life Action League, which donated to the good doctor his fax machine, video player and television. Dr. Guzov recently traveled to America where he lunched with anti-abortion lobbyists. So successful was his trip that upon returning to Russia, he opened hard-currency accounts with Lloyd's Bank of London and the Republic National Bank of New York.

The enterprising link to American dollars and Russia's growing movement is embodied in one man, Mikhail Matskovskii, director of The International Center For Human Values, which publishes Christian Right material. He was appointed last March to The Presidential Commission on Women, Families and Children. His publications which sell in the hundreds of thousands include the key publications of the American pro-life movement. For example he is to publish the "bible" of the American anti-abortion movement entitled *Abortion: Questions and Answers*, sure to out-sell them all. Interestingly enough, some Russian pro-lifers are aware of his scheme, "he'll publish anything as long as it makes money," one recently said. Case in point, he has published two sex manuals under his American contributor's noses.

Needless to say the likes of Focus On Family and The International Right To Life Federation have found a friend in Matskovskii. They are able to promote and distribute their propaganda throughout Russia via fledgling Russian groups hungry for material and cash. As Vanden-Hauvel states in her article, "the Russian anti-abortion movement seems driven as much by pragmatic opportunism as by religious fervor or ideological fanaticism. Although



Pro-choice demo at U.S. embassy in Moscow.



many of the Russian activists I met seemed sincere, ever obsessive, others are undoubtedly attracted to the possibility of receiving fax and video machines, as well as hard currency, contributions and travel to the West." More dramatically however, some Western religious organizations only contribute equipment and money to those Russian hospitals who promise not to perform abortions.

Where does the Russian government fit into all this? Again we can see hand in hand collaboration of American pro-life groups with that of the Russian government. For example, Yeltsin's Office On Family Affairs and the Moscow city government have consistently used Focus On The Family videos, John Willke's (of The International Right To Life Federation) books as the source and the authority on reproductive health, sexuality and child-raising. These materials have found their way into secondary schools, teaching colleges and institutions.

Such right-wing sentiments as outlined, are not hard to find among the parliamentarians and with the victory of right-wing members, that sentiment will be sure to flourish. It is also important to recognize the economic opportunism that propels American anti-abortion groups onto Russian soil. This is not to minimize the grassroots movement that is growing in Russia without the American dollar, for its reliance on right-wing ideology to further their anti-abortion agenda I feel, is much more dangerous than the American "fetus rights" ideology. Regardless of the agenda, the combination that I outlined between the two movements is something to take very seriously.

## CZECHS PLANNING ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST CONFERENCE

The Czech Republic's Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative (ASI) is planning an international gathering in Prague during late June or early July '94.

For more info: Andrej Funk, Druzstevni Ochoz 25, 14000 Praha 4, Czech Republic

## LETTER FROM UKRAINE—SAME OLD SHIT

(A number of requests are made in this letter and we can't handle them all. If you'd like to help please contact OGB).

March 28, Lvov, Ukraine

Dear Neither East Nor West,

What is up? How is your life?

Thanks a lot for *Anarchy* and for the article about Frank Zappa. We are translating it to Ukrainian and probably will use it on our new FM-station "Luks"—it is independent, cool, alternative and good. We will try to give more information about American anarchists in our alternative press, so people will know more about it.

You asked to write what kind of help we expect from you. It is this way:

As you know Ukraine is in very deep...., our economy sucks, the political situation is even worse. The Communists are still in power, but the bad thing is the system. It is impossible to change it. Even the democrats and nationalists in 6 months have lost their common sense. The wages are around \$10, but the prices are very, very high (for some products it is even higher than in the U.S.). Some factories have stopped. Barricades might help us, but who knows. The people don't know what to do. They don't believe in God, in Communism, in anything. Our life is almost like it.

In Amnesty International (AI) we are doing different actions; we write letters of protest, we organize concerts....

Maybe you can write in your press about our

horrible situation and ask for some help for us. People can send us products (coffee, cigarettes, medicine), second-hand clothes, that we can use. Even a couple of bucks in the post might help us. (It would be better to send them in special envelopes, because the post office people rip envelopes and look for money there. Before the KGB used to do it—now the people).

Also, maybe if it's possible, if you can find some funds, and some of us can go to the U.S.A. and work for awhile there. It's very hard to get an American visa for us, the U.S. government doesn't want to take more foreigners inside. So if it's possible, we can send information about 2-3 of us, so you can send us invitations.

Also, we hope that *Anarchy* will get our letter where we can thank them that they print "On Gogol Boulevard," because it's very important for us. We need people all over the world to know about us, about our activities, and "On Gogol Boulevard" does it.

Tomorrow we have an election to the Verhovna Rada (Parliament). Probably the communists and nazis will be elected. One of our members is running also. He is an anarchist, and hopefully he will get through it. So, it's kind of fun to watch it. Our newspaper *European* (see *Anarchy* Spring '93), which was founded 2 years ago, is out of business. The paper is too expensive, and we need a sponsor, who will give us some money. So, people should write not to *European*, but to my place.

We hope that you understand our situation, and that you will help us. Say "Hi" to anarchists in the U.S. from the former Trust Group and now AI.

Good Luck! Take care! Alic and Co.  
Alic Olisevich, 290068 Lviv 68, Ulitsa Zamarstinivska 270/3, Ukraine

## WRITERS/EDITORS WANTED

We are looking for writers for *On Gogol Boulevard*. We need analysis of current events in the east plus editors to do synopses of large text. Interested?

NENW-NYC, 528 5th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215, U.S., 718-499-7720

## TRANSLATORS NEEDED

On Gogol Boulevard needs translators in all East/Central European and ex-USSR languages for our texts. Only the serious should volunteer—too many in the past have flaked out and fucked up on us. If you're serious please write. Thanks!

## HUNGARIAN ANARCHISTS REORGANIZE

In June '93 Hungarian anarchists had a national gathering and reorganized themselves.

Anarchist Federation of Hungary, Budapest 1399, PF. 701/800, Hungary

## BELARUS WORKERS CALL FOR AID—SAME OLD SHIT

(protest letters are called for—these aren't a waste of time—they often work!)

*Appeal by SMOT [Free General Union of Workers]-Belarus to the workers and all people of good will in the West*

At the present time, where a pro-Communist parliamentary majority (96%) has elected the Chief of Police, Mecheslav Grib, as its Speaker, the government of our Republic is making great efforts to put down the free union and independent workers' movement in Belarus. The recent wave of repression against a small number of worker activists is just the beginning of the pro-Communist government's plans to destroy workers opposition. Both the Byelorussian and Russian rulers are hoping to strengthen their power and maintain the current brutal methods of production in the waning economy with the help of Western capital. There are many examples of Western industrialists and politicians going for cooperation with

the governments of the ex-USSR in order to secure super-profits and preserve their own monopoly of power, and thus helping the Communists rub us out. Therefore SMOT-Belorussia issues the following appeal, not to the governments of Western states, but to the workers and all people of good will living on the other side of the border:

*"Friends, we ask you to do all you can to publicize the known cases of repression against our workers fighting for their human rights and a decent life. Do all in your power to prevent your countries aiding the pro-Communist regimes of the ex-Soviet republics. Don't let your governments spend your tax-payers' money to prop up the anti-environmental and inhuman regimes in power in the CIS. Stop the creation of joint ventures between Western firms and enterprises of the ex-USSR whose managements' hands are stained with extensive repression of the workers. The implementation of such joint ventures to create mixed production will only bring joint rightlessness and destitution to the workers in different countries—and unlimited power to the multi-nationals and neo-Bolsheviks."* -SMOT-Belorussia

## CASES THAT NEED SUPPORT:

(This is a synopsis of SMOT's report. For the full version send stamps to Neither East Nor West, 528 5th St., Brooklyn, NY, 11215, U.S.)

1. The Zenith factory in Vilejka had 14 workers put on trial for participating in a wildcat strike 1/12-1/14/94. They were demanding the government dissolve, early elections, "and a government of the peoples' confidence be formed."

2. The Transistor factory fired the President of the factories' Free Union, Nikolai Grinchik. In January he'd organized a "strike demanding that the laws of the Republic... be observed at the enterprise," and also organized a mass union meeting. Other workers subject to harassment by the management are: Vladimir Strelyenko, Mikhail Kolyesen, and Vladimir Dimitrovich.

3. In Mogilyov, Vladimir Sharapov the President of the local Workers' Committee, and Sergei Obodovsky of the Free Union of Belarus, are under prosecution for organizing mass workers meetings and demonstrations in Jan./Feb. '94.

*Protest letters for the above 3 cases go to:*  
Respublika Belarus', 220049 Minsk, ul. Internationalnaya 22, Public Prosecutor, Vasily Shalodonov, Ph. +70172-264166

4. In Minsk at the factory Integral, Igor Azarko, President of the factories' Free Union and SMOT member, was severely reprimanded for organizing a union meeting, and for distributing leaflets. SMOT's paper *Bastal*, and a model collective agreement drafted by SMOT. Other workers in the Free Union being intimidated are Sergei Skameyko, Vladimir Khokhirov, and Nikolai Kazakievich.

The increase in repression is due to Integral becoming a joint venture with German firms. A condition set by the latter is no unions.

*Protest letters for them go to:*  
Respublika Belarus', 220600 Minsk, pl. Kazintsa, NPO "Integral", General Director, Viktor Yemeliyanov, Fax. +70172-787980

5. On Feb. 28, '94 Valentin Vayev of the Minsk complex Belvar was detained and interrogated by police for setting up a strike committee and handing out their appeal, plus distributing SMOT's *Bastal*. Belvar also completed their 8-year effort to fire Anatoly Matveyenko, a long time activist and strike leader. He's the President of the factories' Free Union and Coordinator of SMOT-Belarus. Workers at Belvar are fighting for his reinstatement.

*Protest letters for them go to:*  
Respublika Belarus', 220049 Minsk, pr. F. Skaryny 50, PNO "Belvar", General Director, Nikolai Yerkhov, Fax. +70172-310689

*Please send copies of all letters to:*  
Respublika Belarus', 220049 Minsk, pr. Rokossovskogo 12-I-550, Anatoly Matveyenko, Ph./Fax. +70172-481781





Collage by Johann Humyn Being



# THE ECOLOGY MONTREAL PARTY: A "Libertarian" Frankenstein

by Michael William

**S**hortly before the last Canadian elections, the head of the ruling Conservatives, Brian Mulroney, resigned. Enormously unpopular, his approval rating approaching 10%, Mulroney was visibly damaging the party's already slim chances of winning the upcoming elections. Replacing Mulroney at the party helm was Kim Campbell, a one-time member of the Social Credit Party, a right-wing populist party which is now defunct except in one province.

During the elections any mention of Mulroney by the Conservatives was predictably avoided. Their campaign, though, went further. The party, incredibly, attempted to present itself as outsider, as anti-establishment. It was almost as if the party in power was running against itself.

This desperate reality-bending was ultimately more amusing than effective. The Conservatives were virtually wiped out, going from a comfortable majority to two seats. Such events, however, eloquently reflected a climate in which politicians and parties are despised as never before.

The response of the parties to what negates them—their attempt to integrate and neutralize it—is populism. Significantly, when the Conservatives were elbowed out, they were displaced on the right by the populist Reform Party, which went from three seats to fifty-two. The Party is run almost single-handedly by Preston Manning, an evangelical Christian who presents himself as an anti-politician, ostentatiously refusing a few of the perks of office, but is in fact the son of a former premier and a consummate politician.

Ross Perot, a paranoid, unvarnished authoritarian, evokes electronic town halls while running essentially a one-man show. Demonstrated by Perot is populism's ability to transcend traditional political categories and draw support from both the left and right.

In Russia, a potent nationalist-populist brew allowed a ranting buffoon, Zhirinovsky, to gobble a quarter of the parliamentary vote.

Today populism is ubiquitous, seemingly obligatory. Above all, it is a sure-fire indicator of demagoguery.

\* \* \*

One of the newest kids on the populist block is the libertarian municipalism-inspired Ecology Montreal Party. If "Vote for me, and the people will be in power" constitutes populism's usual refrain, libertarian municipalism's spin might be phrased: "Vote for me, and the state will eventually wither away."

Uh huh.

Montreal is a major centre of libertarian municipalism. Ecology Montreal in effect was initiated primarily by one person, Dimitri Roussopoulos, a self-described anarchist who was a candidate in the last elections, in which more than one "anarchist" ran. Ecology Montreal's members take "their inspiration from the social ecology and urban theories of Murray Bookchin," according to Phillip Chee, a party militant, and many libertarian municipalist books, including Bookchin's, emanate from Roussopoulos' Black Rose Books/*Our Generation* magazine operation. Bookchin himself was brought in to address an Ecology Montreal policy conference. An international social ecology conference with libertarian municipalism as the featured topic will take place in Montreal in 1994....

Until recently, libertarian municipalism has been primarily confined to institutes and academia. Now that it is generating actual political parties and is acquiring a history, it is useful to look at how that history is being represented by the ideology's adherents.

In its "Living in the City" special issue (Fall 93), the Murray Bookchin-influenced Toronto journal *Kick It Over* published an excerpt from a text on libertarian municipalism by Bookchin and an article on Ecology Montreal by Phillip Chee. A one-two, the Bookchin reprint theoretically softens us up for Chee's Ecology Montreal sucker punch.

In his piece Bookchin encourages anarchists to become politicians and to run for office, and drools over "cybernetic devices," making clear his desire to mediate experience through them.

Central to libertarian municipalism is drawing a dubious distinction between the nation-state and the municipal state. Libertarian municipalism legitimizes the city-state but turns up its nose at the nation-state (although Ecology Montreal is clearly willing to coexist with it). Differences between these states, however, are far outweighed by what they have in



common: the omnipresence of the money/commodity economy, the existence of politicians, the laws they impose and the cops and courts that back them up, and the reign of the technocrats necessary to run modern industrial capital. We deal with municipal cops, not the army, on a daily basis.

Chee's article about Ecology Montreal is a classic illustration of Party Thinking eclipsing autonomous thought—of the political organization imposing its own logic and imperatives. Once set in motion, a party rapidly takes on a life of its own. For the party militant people are either inside or outside the party and those on the inside, having internalized the party's imperatives, view those on the outside in a reified, manipulative way (ultimately principally as vote fodder). Thus Chee reels off the banal facts of party life, seemingly blissfully unaware of how it sounds to the unconverted, that Ecology Montreal, rather than a radical departure, is actually more akin to partyism-as-usual: choosing candidates, counting voters, setting up party structures, putting out position papers, making deals with other parties etc. *ad nauseam*—these staples of party "life" provide a structure, a bureaucratic playpen to keep the militants' hands occupied. Psychologically the militant needs to assign the party and his or her activities a key role—to be convinced, in Chee's words, that Ecology Montreal "has the potential to ignite a movement." Also key is the moral superiority which justifies the militant's leading role. For Chee, the party becomes the model of the future society; it is the very purity of the militants' lives which justifies handing them state power.

For the militant the organization becomes the beacon. Thus Ecology Montreal presents itself as an "educational organization," and puts on "educational events." Having come up empty-handed in the most recent elections, libertarian municipalists in Syracuse are presently producing and distributing a journal in order to "educate the public." This vanguard aspect is crucial to Bookchinism. In a recent issue of *Green Perspectives*, for example, editors Murray Bookchin and Janet Biehl defend an "educational" approach, and specifically advocate vanguardism, attempting to put an innocuous, cultural spin on the concept: "The word *vanguard*, we should add, does not throw us into a panic. An avant-garde teacher (or artist) is still a teacher (or artist), and there is no point in pretending otherwise." Present-day anarchists who question vanguardism are referred to with the word anarchist in quotation marks, implying that being an anarchist and questioning vanguardism is incompatible, as the duo pines after the good old days, *i.e.* the "nineteenth and early twentieth centuries," when anarchists and "their organizations" adopted a vanguardist posture. Displayed here is how much Bookchin and Biehl have in common with the foibles of the nineteenth century anarchists—their Enlightenment-based religious belief in techno-rationalism and the ideology of progress, which finds its natural culmination in Bookchin's "cybernetic devices." Also key here are specialization and division of labour: the student/teacher dichotomy and its institutionalization become the initial hierarchy on which all the others are built.

If academia-drenched, this is not simply an academic question. In the early '80s an attempt took place to put this outlook into practice with the creation of the briefly very active and now moribund Anarchos Institute. Initiated in large part by Bookchin and Roussopoulos, the Institute epitomized their vision of a coterie of academics implementing a top-down

relationship vis-a-vis non-academic anarchists initially, and, presumably, eventually a broader milieu. In Bookchinist discourse this is theorized as the "indispensable radical *intelligentsia*" without which "a libertarian movement" will be unable to "emerge." This, however, was not the approach of everyone involved in the Institute. Rapidly a crisis took place, triggered off by Roussopoulos' authoritarianism and unilateral decision-making. When the non-academics in the local Montreal group objected, they were purged by the pros in a clear instance of *academic class* solidarity. (If they don't support Roussopoulos, where are they going to publish?) At a key meeting Bookchin was parachuted in to lend his authority to the purge exercise. In the resulting scandal the Institute rapidly became a ghost of its former self, as the academic rump group implemented classical sleaze techniques like refusing access to the mailing list to the non-academics so they couldn't inform the membership about what was going on. This is just one in a long string of similar incidents involving Roussopoulos, including firing two 'anarchists at Black Rose Books when they attempted to collectivize the project.'

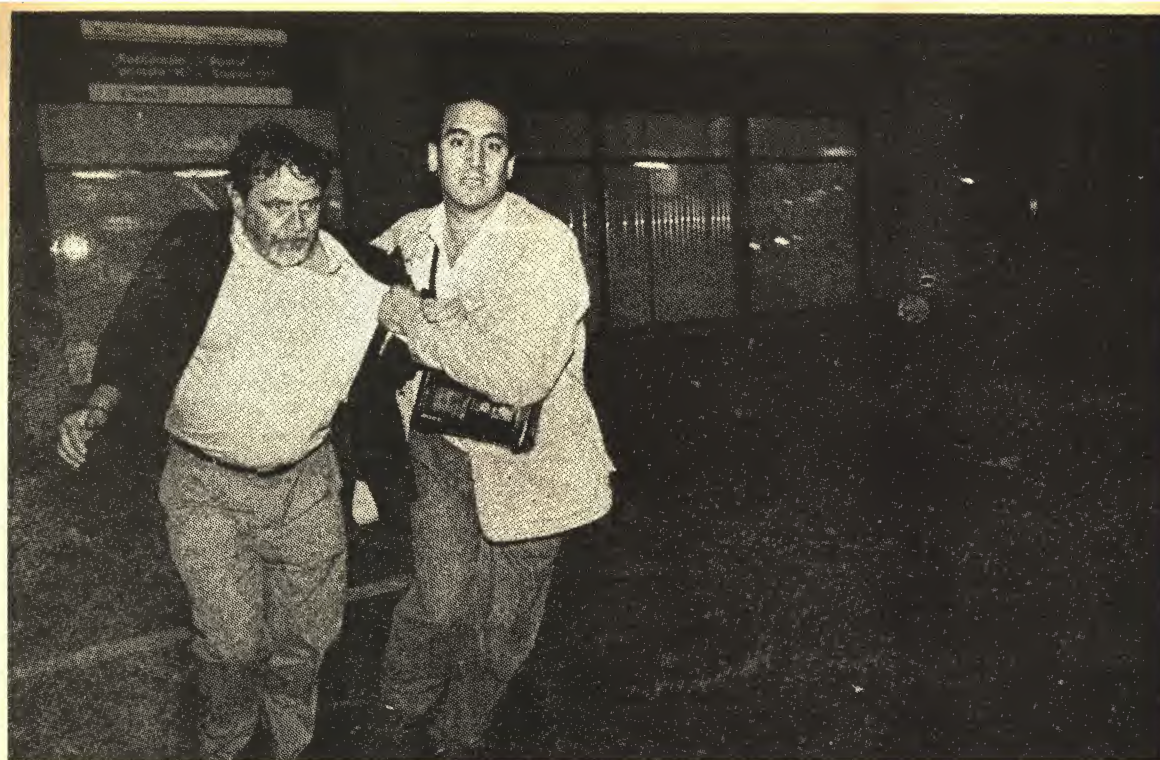
\* \* \*

Despite abundant talk about triggering off "participatory, face to face" activity, no examples are provided by Chee of Ecology Montreal causing anyone to do anything. On the contrary, as he acknowledges, "By far the most publicly visible activity Ecology Montreal has engaged in has been its electoral efforts." Chee's account is a classic case of electoralism imposing its logic and priorities. "During the election campaign," he recounts, "the fundamental disagreements about the movement's structure were pushed below the surface. The crux of the matter was what type of leadership the party should adopt." And, Chee informs us, presently Ecology Montreal is "putting considerable effort into creating an electoral strategy for the 1994 elections."

Chee goes to considerable lengths to distance Ecology Montreal from other parties, especially the social democrats. Evoked by Roussopoulos in Chee's piece is the term "anti-party party," using the German Greens as a model(!). But Ecology Montreal's main concern is clearly grabbing parliamentary power (entirely understandable from an electoral viewpoint, seeing that no Ecology Montreal candidates won in the last election). Thus the party is currently hammering out a "common platform" with "independent city councillors" and other "progressives." This is only more of the tired leftism that has been discredited worldwide, notably, in Canada, with the arrival in power for the first time in the province of Ontario of the New Democratic Party (social democrats). Within a year the popularity of the party plummeted; few retain any illusions about "really-existing" NDPism. Ecology Montreal's desperate attempt to elect a candidate or two also involves an infusion of traditional political horse-trading, as "Alliance 94" proceeds to "divide up the electoral map so as not to run alliance candidates against each other."

Another example of opportunist tinkering with the system is the party's reaction to a proposal to reduce the number of politicians from the current 51. Instead, Ecology Montreal proposed that "Montreal adopt a partial system of proportional representation. Thirty-one seats would remain single





John Gardiner, an executive member of the ruling municipal MCM party, flees as rioters clash with the cops during the Stanley Cup hockey riot last year.

member constituencies with election by direct majority, and 20 seats to be distributed among representatives of the municipalities proportionally to the percentage of the popular vote gained by each party to the city as a whole." Demonstrated here is that despite obligatory complaints about "impersonal bureaucracies and professional politicians," Chee *really believes* in representational democracy—that politicians are legitimate, that parties represent people, that people can be represented by politicians. Thus Ecology Montreal's pathetic solution becomes sprinkling in a few councillors from presently marginalized parties, or otherwise slightly shifting the final party tallies. These token councillors of course would probably be powerless. Disappeared here is that its totalitarian nature is what most defines representative democracy: even when most people don't vote (often the case), politicians get in, backed by the entire state/police apparatus,

Another bureaucratic horror story, to go by Chee's account, has been Ecology Montreal's internal functioning, including factions exiting the party, periods where people weren't talking to each other, and a tendency for power to accumulate in a coordinating committee. At one point, for example, a coordinating committee had to "clean up" the movement" (what movement? Ecology Montreal is a groupuscule, not a movement). In another example of centralization of power, it is also the coordinating committee which is discussing the agreement with other opposition groups not to run candidates against each other. In fact, Ecology Montreal is presently dysfunctional with respect to the structure it has set up, which

invests some power in "local associations." However "Ecology Montreal currently does not have any local associations in existence," Chee informs us, so the ubiquitous coordinating committee is presently acting as the "principal coordinating council." Which is hardly surprising: these municipal parties are basically empty shells which only come "alive" at election time.

An Ecology Montreal program was produced by the coordinating committee and adopted by the membership in 1992. Dense fog and rhetoric render navigating this document a perilous undertaking. Much is clarified though when we learn that the ruling MCM party "can no longer be considered an instrument for progressive change." In other words the MCM *once was*, to use Ecology Montreal's Old Left terminology, "progressive." Ecology Montreal is in large part a back-to-the-roots MCM (a party in which Roussopoulos was once a militant).

Instead of abolishing money, Ecology Montreal intends to preserve the law of value, wage labour and the commodity economy, ensuring that people will continue to buy and sell each other as before. The party's call for full employment makes it clear that they wish to retain high levels of production, and talk of "hiring and promotion practices" underlines that bosses and hierarchy will endure.

Ecology Montreal's call for "the application of a user-pay system on all highways" typifies the Band-aid solutions to be expected on an ecological level. Thus the party is reduced to grumbling about the "excessive use of the automobile," and



vaguely wants to "reduce pollution from industrial sources." These people obviously intend to keep the techno-grid fundamentally intact.

Also of note is a section on non-violence. Here we learn that Ecology Montreal is "simply opposed to the use of force." They certainly don't want non-pacifist hordes of uncontrollables dislodging *their* politicians. The document explicitly rules out going on the offensive against the cops (e.g. riots), and advocates a "weapons-free zone," disarming people against fascists and Stalinists, who are hardly in the habit of beating swords into plowshares.

Concerning elected candidates, the Party's approach is democratic centralism. Once arrived at, in other words, the party line must be toed. "Defending and promoting the programme and strategy" is obligatory, the party statutes outline, and "the final decision of Ecology Montreal on any matter must be accepted." Mindless obedience is of course the very definition of the party hack.

Lumping libertarian municipalism in with other strains of populism will elicit objections from some, no doubt. After all, Bookchin and Chee often *sound* anti-authoritarian, even anti-statist. However, implementing change top-down through the state is clearly not anti-statist: it's leftism. Roussopoulos' idiotic position papers which hope "to unite the left" demonstrate that, despite the anarcho-rhetoric, he's just a leftist. Libertarian municipalism is a form of left populism because instead of locating all legitimacy in autonomous activity, it posits political parties which claim to *represent* widespread disgust with "impersonal bureaucracies and professional politicians" (in Chee's words). People, however, can only represent themselves; the party has no role to play. The role of the party in other words is to immediately abolish itself.

Ecology Montreal wishes to recuperate our disgust and to channel it towards electoralism, the reformist Ecology Montreal racket, and leftism—"... so unpopular is the MCM that the 1994 election may reflect enormous political ferment, according to Phillip Chee," we learn for example in *Green Perspectives*. At the same time Chee fears that Ecology Montreal "will fall on the deaf ears of a people fed up and increasingly cynical of the current political system"—in other words that his gang will get the boot along with the rest. Cynicism is corrosive and a double-edged sword to be sure but it is also an antidote to false hopes. Unfortunately there are always new parties popping up, propping up a more and more discredited system. With enough negativity, however, there might just be a qualitative leap...

\* \* \*

Ecology Montreal, Chee, and Bookchin also exalt "the citizen," a term which, like "the proletariat" of yore, becomes the defining role—the role we are all expected to play. Max Stirner notes this term's relation to the (anti-monarchist) bourgeois revolution, whereby everyone is "raised or lowered to the dignity of the *citizen*: (...) the *third* estate becomes the sole estate, namely, the estate of—*citizens of the state*." Or, in Ecology Montreal's words, citizens "must be aware of their duties and rights as citizens." As Stirner notes, "... few qualms are felt about changing existing laws. But who would dare sin against the *idea* of the State, or refuse to submit to the *idea* of law. So people remain 'law-respecting' loyal 'citizens.'"

Libertarian municipalism proposes to decentralize the state, to create a profusion of mini-states. Thus "neighbourhood councils should be empowered to enact laws," according to Ecology Montreal. With laws of course come the cops to back them up (green-uniformed, no doubt). Hardly surprisingly the police question propels Ecology Montreal to new heights of Orwellian obfuscation: in Ecology Montreal-speak, the police become yet another brand of *coordinator*—they "coordinate ... efforts to enhance and protect public safety." How sweet.

Instead of using the ever-changing desires of unique individuals as a starting point, Chee imposes a pre-fab, abstract, all-purpose councilism. "Mandated and recallable delegates" become the theoretical antidote to bureaucratization. But as John Zerzan notes, "delegates and recall have always been, in practice, direct routes to bureaucratization and the rule of experts (consult all trade union history)." In an industrial economy these so-called mandated and recallable delegates become mouthpieces of the desires of the megamachine, which are relayed back to the base *as necessities*.

Ecology Montreal's role is to legitimize the present municipal state through their participation and to legitimize the cybernetic state to come. Ecology Montreal wants us to internalize—to self-manage—the state. With our resistance to it weakened, authority will circulate more freely through the pyramid of power. As opposed to a Japanese-style implanted technobureaucracy, Ecology Montreal proposes a more participatory self-alienation where we choose our technocrats more directly (if we vote for them, they must be ours). Integral to this approach are the "cybernetic devices," "mass technology" and "sophisticated technology" marketed in Bookchinism. I have already discussed this aspect in a previous article in *Anarchy* in a passage which began with a quote from Bookchin:

"I believe that science and technology should be used in the service of refurbishing and rehabilitating a new balance with nature."

But Bookchin's vision of a high-tech apparatus passively "in the service" of humanity—a discourse he shares with all the technocrats—denies the qualitative leap, the autonomization of technology which occurs with the implementation of mass techniques in the metropolis. Later, Bookchin backhandedly acknowledges this autonomization, when the underlying technodeterminism of his discourse makes "sophisticated technology" a universal given: "...the very things we are using presuppose a great deal of sophisticated technology. Let's face the fact that we need these technologies." Rather than presupposing a great deal of sophisticated technology, isn't it more appropriate to question "the very things we are using"? When Bookchin says "we need" these technologies, he is speaking only for himself.

—*Anarchy* #33

Not surprisingly, anti-civilizationists are the object of particular scorn in the Bookchin organ *Green Perspectives*, where "anarcho-primitivism" is termed a "pathology." That civilization thinks it needs to cure us is par for the course. It is more and more obvious, though, that it is civilization which is the problem.

\* \* \*

Once parties and the municipal state are swallowed, accepting the nation-state is only a short theoretical step away,





Over 40 cop cars were damaged or destroyed during the Montreal Stanley Cup riot in 1993.

as demonstrated by anarcho-nationalist Serge Roy's call for Quebec separatism in the Bookchin-oriented Quebec City journal *Hors d'Ordre*.

Meanwhile, Bookchinism continues to spread. The most recent issue of *Green Perspectives* lists works by Bookchin translated into Norwegian, Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish and Turkish. This interest in effect is hardly surprising. Apart from its academic appeal, Bookchinism can be very attractive to a wide variety of middle-of-the-road anarchists who are searching for simplistic, seemingly squeaky-clean solutions.

This essay is not intended as an over-all critique of Bookchinism, which hopefully someone will undertake. In the meantime, John Zerzan's brief but pointed review of Bookchin's *The Rise of Urbanization and the Decline of Citizenship* remains the most incisive critique to date.<sup>2</sup>

## Update

On February 24, Alliance '94 made its first public appearance in the form of a forum on the role of the opposition at City Hall. The event was a complete flop; as many journalists showed up as members of the public. Four Alliance hacks gave pep talks, followed by a discussion/question period. It quickly became apparent that yet another coordinating committee was running the show; people could offer comments but had no real input in decision-making. One person called for a debate about what is apparently a major feature of the Alliance—running a candidate for mayor. Roussopoulos immediately squelched the idea of a debate. Running a mayoral candidate

was the “center,” the “heart” of the Alliance, he enthused, waxing lyrical, a necessary “symbol of unity.” Besides, the question had already been dealt with by the coordinating committee.

Much hand-wringing took place over the fact that there was no chance that anything approaching 50% of the electorate would vote. Figures were tossed around as to what would be a reasonable Alliance tally. Marcel Sevigny, a leftist councillor, said that winning six or seven seats could be counted a success.

The evening was co-chaired by Bernard Bourbonnais, who also gave a talk as the Ecology Montreal rep. At one point he excused himself after making a clumsy statement, joking that he “wasn't enough of a politician yet.” Not to worry, chump, you're learning fast. Also at the presiding table were three people from the *Our Generation* crowd. In effect the Alliance apparently consists of Ecology Montreal, two leftist councillors and a handful of academics and hangers on. The few people who showed up to check out the event seemed primarily wary. One man who had been sent an invitation complained bitterly about being confronted with a “*fait accompli*” concerning process and decision-making. “The community isn't here,” another man noted, injecting a refreshing breath of reality into this stale, tedious non-event.

## April 19 Update

Alliance '94 has now collapsed. Ecology Montreal and the DCM (a small leftist party) are presently courting each other

Continued on page 33



# Nonmonogamy

## Interview conducted by Anders Corr

*Leni Papatestas and I have been friends since we met in the anti-nuclear movement in 1989. I have been interested in nonmonogamy for about a year since I first experimented with it and Leni will tell you her stories below. She is twenty-two and in her third year as an undergraduate at the University of California Santa Cruz where she majors in Biology/Psychology. I am twenty-three and spend most of my time in self-education about radical politics.*

*The use of the word nonmonogamy in this interview is problematic in that it means "more than one wife," non-monandry meaning "more than one man." A term I prefer is "polyamorous."*

**Anders:** How would you describe nonmonogamy to a potential lover?

**Leni:** I have more than one friend, why shouldn't I have more than one lover? Why should I limit myself to one person? I don't feel like you limit me, but I feel like I get my input from the outside world from many different sources, and yes, I may love you, may be in love with you, but that does not mean that I may not fall in love with someone else at the same time. I love my friends, at times more than I love my lovers, so, why the hell can't I end up with them? Some of my friends I am much closer to than some of my lovers, but that supposedly is not an interference. Why not? Because I am not their lover, I am just their friend, that I tell every single thing to. I am telling them all the shit that I am not telling you, because they are my "friend." I don't like the whole definition. It is hard for me to say what a nonmonogamous relationship is because I don't like definitions. I basically think that you are in a relationship with every single person you meet, and there are different levels of it, and you feel differently about certain people. The basic thing is that you limit yourself by saying you are in a monogamous relationship. You can care about someone else more, or just as much and it doesn't take away from your other friends. I think that is why people are scared of nonmonogamous relationships, because they think that it is a threat to them, and to their relationship with you, but it isn't a threat. Maybe you should interview people as to why they are scared of nonmonogamous relationships.

**Anders:** Who do you call a "lover" and who do you call a "friend"?

**Leni:** I guess under the terms of society you call a lover someone you are sleeping with as well as doing more than just hanging out. I

don't know. I don't necessarily call anyone a lover. I just think "I kiss this person as well." I guess that is what makes them a lover. Once you are in a relationship, say you have been



Mark Neville

seeing this person...or doing... *kissing this person for longer than you have been kissing anyone else.* (laughter) Really, I think it is that vague sometimes for me, maybe it is not for other people. I really have problems labeling it. At first, it is someone who you think about a little more. You spend more time with them, perhaps, but not all the time. You probably sleep with them. I really don't define any of that stuff though.

**Anders:** Are you in a nonmonogamous relationship now?

**Leni:** I don't know what I am in now. (laughter) I am *kissing* somebody right now, but we haven't defined it, and we are probably not going to. If I started sleeping with someone else, I would probably tell him, if it happens to be a him, that I am seeing another person. He knows that I hate the definitions. He happens to be one of my really good friends and we just ended up getting together one night, so now I guess something could be construed, but he knows that I am not monogamous. You just explain to someone that you care for them, and you will call them when you are going to call them, and you are going to think about them sometimes. I don't stay in relationships that I necessarily have to explain to this person, because then they feel threatened all the time.

In fact I got out of one. I was seeing a woman before this and she did not want a monoga-

mous relationship necessarily, she never said that, but I knew if I saw someone else, or if she found out that I had kissed somebody else, or whatever, that she would *freak*. So I said "Look, I need my freedom." Part of me having my freedom is that I call you when I want to call you, all these things, and so we ended the relationship.

**Anders:** What is the longest you have ever been in a relationship that was nonmonogamous?

**Leni:** Two years.

**Anders:** How was that?

**Leni:** It was one of my best friends. It was easy, because it was understood. Partially because it was never defined as a relationship. It was a relationship if you start defining it using terms that were set up in a monogamous society. I think the word "relationship" is set up from a monogamous society. If I am going to be in nonmonogamous relationships, then I can't even label the relationship necessarily.

It was clear throughout the relationship that that person was a person that I was seeing. It wasn't just someone I was sleeping with. It is more than that, because you care about them, think about them, spend time with them...you do whatever you are supposed to do in a relationship, but we never *really* said, "We are in a relationship." We did talk about *our* relationship, as in how we were relating to each other.

A relationship is a separate entity. You would have these two people and then there is this relationship, but that is bullshit. *You just have the two fucking people.* You talk to the other person about what you are doing with them. So that was a couple years. I am not the jealous type, that makes it easy too. Because I figure I am going to do what I want to do, but I didn't end up with lots of other people.

**Anders:** How many in that two year period?

**Leni:** He was away, so there was a bunch while he was away. (laughter) There were probably at least six.

**Anders:** He was away for how long?

**Leni:** Six or seven months.

**Anders:** So you only saw people when he was away?

**Leni:** Yes, but I started seeing people when he came back too. I saw two people while he was around.

**Anders:** How many people did he see?



**Leni:** Maybe one or two. Not as many as me. (Laughter) I don't know what he did when he was away.

**Anders:** How did you deal with telling him? When you saw someone else, was there a protocol for breaking the news?

**Leni:** I just told him.

**Anders:** How did you take it when he told you?

**Leni:** I was worse than he was, but we were never really cheating on each other because we never *said* we were going to be monogamous, so it was no big deal. I am thinking now "Ooo, I cheated on him." But I didn't cheat on *shit*. I cheated on some term I don't use. How did I take it? I would ask him how it was, and whether he liked her, and how he felt about it, just like I would ask a friend. I like to be told in person, and I always ask for details. Roderick went with two people, and I asked "What was it like? How do you feel about her?" I guess I detach myself. I stand back and I say, this is my friend and this is what they are telling me. I am interested in what in the hell is going on in their life. I am not saying it doesn't make me sad, to a certain extent I feel "What about me?" There is that, it is there, but I don't dwell on it. I guess you just have to be self-confident.

**Anders:** Did you feel jealous at all?

**Leni:** Maybe a little bit sometimes. I would feel jealous because I would think that he would care about...like there was this one woman and I felt "Oh, he cares about her more than he cares about me." You want to feel cared about, so I guess that is jealousy. I was never angry. I never thought he was doing something wrong, and I hope he felt the same way. What happened was, we eventually ended the relationship because I just needed even more freedom, to be seeing whomever I wanted to whenever I wanted, and I felt a little limited by the relationship. I did not want to be in a serious relationship and so we ended it because I was starting to go off and be with whomever, whenever, and do whatever I wanted. (Laughter) I went into a very bad period from then on. I mean, it wasn't *bad*, it was just...rampant. (laughter) Let's put it that way.

**Anders:** Why did you make the decision to be in a nonmonogamous relationship with him?

**Leni:** I don't like the definition. What happens if I walk down the street and I see someone, and I want to sleep with her, or I walk down the street and I run into a friend who I haven't seen in a long time, and then I end up going out with this friend, and then I keep going out with this friend and then all of a sudden...see, someone can be a lover even if you aren't sleeping with them. You just care about them a shitload. When that happens, you never have to explain it, because *they* are not a threat, because you aren't *sleeping* with them. It is only when you sleep with them that then...it's bizarre. The last woman I went out with, we never slept together, but shit we saw each other for six months, I would call it a relationship. I wouldn't have called it just a "simple friendship."

**Anders:** Were you in love with the person you had a two year nonmonogamous relationship with, or do you even use that terminology?

**Leni:** Yes, I was in love with him. I do not use that terminology, but I would say that I was in love with him. It was even worse then, because I was all gushy for a while, all that stupid shit. (laughter) I get bad when I am gushy, I don't like it. It is fun, but it is like, you are thinking about the person and it is just stupid. (Laughter) You can't control it. It is true. You start baking shit, and bringing them flowers...I do it! I am doing it for this person I am seeing now,



NEIL E

and we are not seeing each other. (laughter)

**Anders:** Have you been in other nonmonogamous relationships where you've been in love with the person?

**Leni:** No. That was the only one.

**Anders:** You say you are not the jealous type, but that is very different from a lot of people I know who have really strong feelings of jealousy. Why do you feel you aren't jealous?

**Leni:** Because I told myself a long time ago that if I want to live my life the way I like to live my life, which is very free, I would not want anyone to be jealous of what I was doing, then I can't be jealous of other people, and it has just become something that I am not anymore. I think there was a time when I felt jealousy. The same guy I was in love with in high school, we were friends then, and *he* was going out with *somebody else*. And I felt "Oh, but I care about you." At that point when I was in high school I still felt jealousy and then later I realized that I want to make my lifestyle so that I can do what I want when I want to and I do not want people to be offended. On the same hand, I don't feel like I should be able to restrict someone else from living their life in whatever way they wish. At one point it was hard, but not now, seven years later. That was my junior year in high school.

**Anders:** So it was a conscious decision.

**Leni:** Yeah, but I don't think it was hard either. I think maybe if I had been a more jealous type, it would have been harder to switch. It was just like (snap) okay. But it was a conscious awareness.

**Anders:** Previous to your decision not to be jealous did you already tend towards that direction?

**Leni:** Yes.

**Anders:** What was the reason you were headed that way?

**Leni:** You are jealous because you are judging somebody. You are judging their actions. You are jealous because you are feeding into something you don't even know exists usually. Probably the definition of jealousy is you think someone else cares more about someone than you, or they are paying more attention to somebody else. I am jealous because they are not paying attention to me. *They have every right not to pay attention to you!* Why the fuck should they pay attention to you? You are probably sitting around being jealous. Why would they want to pay attention to you? You are going to whine all the time. I like to let people do what they want to do and so they do what they want to do and I do what I want to do, and nobody is jealous. I don't feel like you can judge another person, and you can't project, and I think that is what jealousy is about. It is projecting something. You usually don't ask the person "Do you care about that person?" People don't do that, because if they did that they wouldn't be jealous. The whole thing is that just because you are with someone else or you care about someone else, it is no reflection on your relationship. Every relationship with every person is different. My interaction with you at this moment has no reflection on my interaction with my friend Bryan yesterday. Sure, I am the same person, I am connecting with both, but I am not talking to you because I want to spite Bryan. I am talking to you because I am interested in what you have to say, or what I have to say. You are interested in what I have to say. (Laughter)

**Anders:** You mentioned earlier the "package of monogamy." What do you mean by that?

**Leni:** The package of monogamy: you talk about them as your lover, or your *boyfriend*. God, that word is sooo gross. You spend all your time with them, you think about them when you are not spending time with them, and whatever goes with that. I think in all my other relationships, sure I really cared about them, and Roderick I was even in love with, but spent time doing other things, I thought about other things, I did not think about them all the time, and I told them what was up in my life, but not necessarily immediately.

You communicate more in nonmonogamous relationships. I do. I did not communicate in my last monogamous relationship. I did not communicate because there are all these *things* in monogamous relationships. Because you are not supposed to be thinking about other people, you are not supposed to be doing other



things, so you don't tell them you are. You don't tell them "Oh, I saw so-and-so." You don't even joke about it. In nonmonogamy you can joke about it "Oh, and I might be sleeping with...." just joking about it, not that you are going to do it, but you can joke about it and it is OK.

Anytime I try to limit myself to a monogamous relationship, I have been scared that I am not calling this person enough, because they want me to be calling them, and I am not. Because I just don't work that way. It is not because I don't care about them, but I just don't call people all the time necessarily. So I get all worried that I am not calling them enough, or that they like me more than I like them, and that is a problem in monogamous relationships, and I don't think it is a problem in nonmonogamous ones.

The way I have always set up my nonmonogamous relationships is that you just are a person, and you happen to care about somebody else. You care about some other people too, if you happen to, and you don't always. I don't think you will necessarily sleep with someone else just because you are in a nonmonogamous relationship, but you have that freedom. In general, I have a problem with definitions, and if I even define it as a relationship, then it gets all screwed up for lots of reasons.

**Anders: Do you think that you will ever be in a monogamous relationship again?**

**Leni:** I think I might be with one person for a long period of time and not be with somebody else, but I do not think it will ever be defined as a monogamous relationship—but it might be a "monogamous" relationship if you look eight years down the road and it is the only person I have been with.

**Anders: But you will never make that commitment?**

**Leni:** No. I don't think I can make that commitment.

**Anders: What if you really really really like someone? Do you think you would want to be monogamous with them?**

**Leni:** I want to be with them, but what is wanting to be monogamous? Define it.

**Anders: Being sexual solely with them and having them be sexual solely with you.**

**Leni:** No, but that might just happen. Sure, I want that to a certain extent, but not an overriding power in the relationship. It is not the defining factor. Yes, that is maybe what I want, but if it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen. Keep your options open. With this last woman I was seeing, I did not want to see anyone else necessarily, for a while I was really into it, but that doesn't last forever necessarily. There was a time when I didn't want to sleep with other people but we didn't define it as a monogamous relationship. If you really like somebody, sure you only want to be sexual with them, because you really like them, but there might be a time when you don't.

**Anders: Are lesbian nonmonogamy and heterosexual nonmonogamy different from**

**each other?**

**Leni:** The lesbians I have been with have wanted to be more monogamous rather than less. They totally become one person. I can never do this joke right, but what does a lesbian bring on her second date? A U-Haul truck. They always want to move in with each other—"They." Me. Us! Whatever—which has actually been a problem, because I will admit, I like women just the same way as I like men and sometimes I am more interested in being with a woman, and sometimes it is like, God, why do you have to want to move in with me? I don't think



everyone is that way.

**Anders: So all of your relationships with lesbians have been nonmonogamous?**

**Leni:** I did not sleep with anyone else during the period of time, but there are also men who I did not sleep with other people. I never made the agreement that I would not go off and sleep with someone else. I never said "this is monogamous." I am really good at not defining it for long periods of time. Sometimes I avoid it, which I think is shitty, but sometimes it is just easier to avoid the definition and just skirt around it, not talk about it. It is much nicer when you talk about it, but that is true with everything.

**Anders: You were never in one of these relationships where you were restricted. Maybe the definition of monogamous is "you are restricting your activity outside of a relationship." Self restriction, even unrecognized self restriction, is monogamy.**

**Leni:** Yes, definitely. The last woman I was with was undefined, but I definitely felt like I did not have the freedom if I wanted to care about somebody else, to do so freely, and I talked with the woman so much, that I felt like it would suck if I did that, so I better get out of the relationship and then I can talk to her just as much as I talked to her about anything I want.

**Anders: That is why you left the relationship, because you felt restricted.**

**Leni:** Yes.

**Anders: Is there anything you think you lose in a nonmonogamous relationship?**

**Leni:** No.

**Anders: Nothing?**

**Leni:** No.

**Anders: There is no tradeoff, it is just one hundred per cent better to be nonmonogamous.**

**Leni:** If you don't make definitions, yes. I don't think there is anything I lose. [Laughter] The only thing I would be losing is, "Oh my God, they might sleep with somebody else," but I don't care! Sure, let them go sleep with someone else, so might I. If you are losing how they care about you, you are going to lose that anyway. I think you leave the communication channels more open in a nonmonogamous relationship because you can do whatever you want. If you do, then you can tell them about it because it is okay instead of "Oh my God, I just cheated on them," or whatever.

With this woman, I was thinking about this guy all the time, and I could not tell her that, but he happens to be one of my really good friends, and I think about him all the time anyway but I could not tell her "I have been thinking about Bryan all the time lately, it is really weird, I have been having these dreams about him." She didn't want to hear that. With a nonmonogamous relationship you could say that, hopefully, if it is a communicative relationship.

Because nonmonogamous relationships are not as prevalent, there are less expectations for them because society is not set up for them, and I like having less expectations. I think expectations are bullshit, I really do. You don't know what will happen tomorrow, I might drive away and die. This might be our last conversation. You still treat people with respect and care about people. A friend of mine put it really succinctly, they were telling me how I act and they were saying "You do what you want but you are still there for people." I think that is the ideal thing. You do what you want but you are still there for other people. You are not wrapped up in their lives.

**Anders: Do you feel like you have a lot of self-confidence?**

**Leni:** I think so.

**Anders: What about your sexuality and feeling like you are a desirable person. Do you feel like you are a desirable person?**

**Leni:** Yes, but I don't know with this haircut. I just got it cut yesterday. I have never had short hair in my entire life. Haircut aside, yes, I think I am a desirable person because I have already played that game. I went out and basically found out whether I was desirable or not. I could sleep with a person every single night if I wanted to, and it was gross, but it was fun. Sexuality is easy. [Laughter] If you want it to be, or else it is bad, just teasing and fun. I like that part too. I am relatively confident.

**Anders: Say you were not confident about yourself....**



Leni: I would want to be in a monogamous relationship, not to say that everyone in a monogamous relationship is not confident—you can't say that, but to a certain extent I think monogamy helps you know someone is going to be there for you. But that is bullshit. It is an expectation that they will be there for you just because you define it as a monogamous relationship. They might not be there for you. They might be sitting on the couch reading the paper saying "Duh, have you seen those stupid movies?"

People are going to be there for you if they are going to be there for you, regardless of how you define a relationship. They are not going to be there just because they are supposed to, or if they are, they might not be happy. It is as if you go over to someone's house, you are supposedly in a relationship and you don't want to be there that day. You might want to be there the next day, but why go over there if you don't want to? You shouldn't have to, but it is expected that you go. It is expected that you call them, it is the whole expectation thing.

Anders: Sometimes you are really good friends with someone, and you just sleep with them once, it is really good to do that, because it takes all that sexual tension away that you have had with this person a long time. You do that, and then you are friends again. With Lucile, that is what happened. Afterwards we were much more cuddly, every time we wanted to be cuddly together it wasn't necessarily a come-on. You didn't have to think, "Oh shit, she is going to think I am coming onto her because I want to hold her." Once you come-on to someone and then consummate it, it is not a come-on anymore, it is friendly.

Leni: I think it is more accepted for men to be sleeping with more people than it is for women.

Anders: Tell me about social acceptance and your nonmonogamy.

Leni: It is totally unaccepted. You are called a slut, you really are. I used to work at Pizza My Heart. You know when I worked there, and I had a reputation. I didn't even sleep with a lot of people from there, because I knew if I did it would be bad, but I had a reputation as a slut, but oh well. To a certain extent I had to say I am not going to stop sleeping with people just because I have a stupid reputation. I still want to sleep with them, so I will sleep with them and have a reputation. I don't think it is very socially accepted. I think it is more accepted for

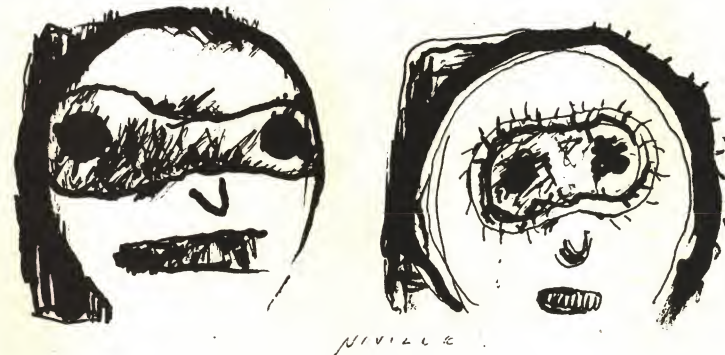
men, but I am not a man, so I don't know.

Anders: Yea, I think it is much more socially acceptable for men.

Leni: Guys go out, a night on the town....

Anders: When I say I am nonmonogamous, no one says, oh that is horrible, they just get a smirk on their face.

Leni: Or you are one of those. You are a dog. That is what me and my friends always used to call guys who slept around. Guys are dogs, a bunch of dogs.



Anders: When a man sleeps with more than one woman there is an edge of admiration you get from other men. That is what I get.

Leni: But it is not cool at all for women. Especially not among lesbians, but that is also

because I tend to sleep with lesbians who are not bisexual and then they don't even like it when I sleep with guys. That is another nice factor in my life. The heterosexual female friends that I have never talk about nonmonogamy. Every once in a while it comes up that you've slept with a lot of people, but most of the time everyone is supposed to assume nobody has slept with a bunch of people, which is bull.

Anders: How does AIDS and venereal disease affect a nonmonogamous person?

Leni: The simplest answer is that nonmonogamy is not dangerous if you use safe sex practices, also if you know the people you are with. Nonmonogamy doesn't mean that you are sleeping with just random people necessarily. I don't think people who are monogamous are always safe. That is a myth. You don't always have to be sleeping with other people to be in a nonmonogamous relationship. You can have the freedom to sleep with

other people but you don't, or you can become emotionally involved with more than one person but not sleep with more than one person. If you are sleeping with more than one person, you use safe sex.

## A "Libertarian" Frankenstein

from page 29

with an eye to stitching together a "federation" for the election campaign. "Our hope is to form a federation, meaning there would be a single party, but membership in the party would be limited to associations [Ecology Montreal and the DCM]," Ecology Montreal spokesperson Andrea Levy is quoted as saying in *Hour*, a local cultural/news-weekly.

"There is considerable interest and enthusiasm on both sides at this point," chirped DCM leader Sam Boskey. O the mating rituals of marginalized leftist groupuscles!

Meanwhile, the international social ecology conference on libertarian municipalism will take place on May 7

and 8. Bookchin will be the predictable featured speaker and Andrea Levy will give a talk as the Ecology Montreal rep. Some local anti-authoritarians are contemplating showing up to protest the libertarian municipalism racket and to distribute this text.

### Notes

1. I was not a member of the Anarchos Institute, but followed events closely. Documents about the Institute and the Black Rose firings are available by writing to: Michael, C.P. 1554 Succ. B, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3B 3L2.

2. Appeared in *Anarchy*, *Demolition Derby* and *Interrogations Pour La Communaute Humaine*.



# FLORES MAGON AND THE MEXICAN LIBERAL PARTY

by Brian Morris

**R**icardo Flores Magon has been described as one of the intellectual precursors of the Mexican revolution. He is little known outside Mexico, and even within anarchist circles and texts his name is little encountered—apart from the pioneering study on him edited by David Poole (1977). But Flores Magon was an important and influential anarchist whose writings and activities had a crucial impact on the Mexican revolution. The Mexican Liberal Party, headed by Flores Magon, was closely implicated in the industrial strikes at Cananea and Orizaba.

Flores Magon was born on September 16, 1874, in San Antonio Eloxochitlan in the state of Oaxaca. His father was a Zapotec Indian and a firm believer in the communal ownership of land; his mother a mestiza. While still young his family moved to Mexico City where Ricardo and his two brothers Jesus and Enrique attended school. It was while at the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria that Flores Magon took part in his first protest against the Diaz dictatorship. He was charged with sedition and sentenced to five months imprisonment. The following year, 1893, he joined the staff of an opposition newspaper, *El Demócrata*. But within a few months the paper was banned by the government and its staff arrested: Flores Magon was lucky to escape. In 1895 he qualified as a lawyer, but he decided not to practice law but instead to devote himself to political activities and to the struggle against the hated Diaz regime. Having become acquainted with the writings of Row, Malatesta and Kropotkin, Flores Magon, together with his brother Jesus, founded the newspaper *Regeneracion*, the first

issue appearing in August 1900. Initially a law journal, *Regeneracion*, by the end of the year, had become much more radical, openly attacking the Diaz government.

In February 1901 Flores Magon attended the first congress of Liberal Clubs, held at San Luis Potosi, and it was there that he first met Librado Rivera. On the initiative of Camillo Arriaga, whose father owned one of the largest silver mines in the area, Liberal Clubs had been formed throughout Mexico. Arriaga was a mining engineer and a former senator who had been dismissed by Diaz. The aim of these clubs was specifically to combat the growing significance of the clergy in this country. But while other delegates at the congress were content to spell out their anti-clericalism, Flores Magon made his first open attack on the Diaz dictatorship. He denounced the government as a "den of thieves." It wasn't long before the government responded, for in May he was arrested along with his brother Jesus and sentenced to twelve months of imprisonment for "insulting the president." The Liberal Clubs too were broken up by the police and their members imprisoned. His younger brother Enrique however, continued to publish *Regeneracion*, Ricardo managing to smuggle articles he had written in prison to him. It was printed clandestinely. On his release from prison in April 1902 Flores Magon took over an anti-Diaz and satirical weekly, *El Hijo del Ahuizote*. But this popular paper was also soon suppressed by the government and Magon was again arrested—along with Librado and his brother Enrique—this time for "ridiculing public officials." He was to spend a further five months in Belem prison. In June 1903 the supreme

court of Mexico passed an edict forbidding the publication of any article written by Flores Magon. Realizing that it was no longer practical to stay in Mexico amid the mounting repression, at the end of 1903 Flores Magon left Mexico to seek refuge in the United States, where many liberals had already fled. In exile he was joined by a handful of close comrades; Enrique, Librado Rivera, Juan Sarabia, and Antonio I. Villarreal. By this time his elder brother Jesus had given up the anti-Diaz struggle and had gone to Mexico to open up a law office.

After working some months as a laborer in order to raise funds, Flores Magon was able to resume the publication of *Regeneracion*. This was in November, 1904. Three months later he moved from San Antonio to St. Louis, Missouri, continuing to publish the weekly newspaper with the help of Librado Rivera. In September, 1905, along with Sarabia, Villarreal, Rivera and his brother Enrique, Magon formed the Junta Organizadora del Partido Liberal Mexicano—the group motto being "reform, liberty, and justice." While in St. Louis Magon and his associates established close links with the Western Federation of Miners, the organizers of the Industrial Workers of the World, and such anarchists as Emma Goldman and Florencio Bazara, the latter being a former comrade of Malatesta. Flores Magon attended the lectures of Goldman and the two anarchists became firm friends. Copies of *Regeneracion* were posted by the group to Mexico and they travelled from hand to hand within the Republic. Even Zapata is said to have been influenced by it. The Liberal Party of Mexico was less of a political party than a coordinating center for radical activists, and it

remained as such until 1918 when it was disbanded owing to the imprisonment of Flores Magon and Rivera.

But within a month of the founding of the party, Flores Magon and his comrades were again being harassed—this time by Pinkerton detectives who raided the offices of *Regeneracion* and took the presses and office equipment. Flores Magon and Juan Sarabia were arrested were arrested. Released on bail and fearing that the United States government would extradite them to Mexico, they decided to flee to Toronto, Canada. A reward of \$20,000 was offered for the capture of Flores Magon. While he was in Canada the program of the Mexican Liberal Party was published in July 1906.

Although somewhat reformist in tone, for its time this program was extremely radical, and indeed went much further than the Mexican constitution of 1917. Drawn up by the extreme left wing of Mexican liberalism, it represented, as Gilly writes, "a milestone in Ricardo Flores Magon's evolution towards anarchism and an understanding of the need for an armed social revolution to appropriate the capitalists and big landowners" (1983: 57).

Among its many clauses the program included: the abolition of the death penalty, the suppression of compulsory military service, complete secular education for children, a maximum working day of eight hours, a ban on child labor, cancellation of all peon-debt to the landowners, the restitution of communal lands to the villages and the protection of the Indian peoples (Flores Magon 1977).

In September that same year Flores Magon moved secretly to El Paso and began to organize armed uprisings against the Diaz government. The first of these took place in the town of Jimenez, Coahuila, when a group of thirty liberals took control of the main plaza before being forced to withdraw by federal forces. Four days later three hundred liberals attacked Acayucan Veracruz, but again were forced to withdraw through lack of arms. Several other small-scale actions took place in the north of the country. By this time the PLM had forty-four clandestine guerilla units, comprised mainly of working class volunteers, and Liberal Clubs were active throughout Mexico. And, as we have noted, there was widespread labor unrest throughout the

country. The circulation of *Regeneracion* within Mexico, though underground, was reckoned to be between 20,000 and 30,000 copies. Both Diaz and the American state department were alarmed at these events and the American Ambassador to Mexico wrote to the department that the PLM "worried" Diaz, "harmed United States" business interests and advocated "anarchism" (Cockcroft 1968: 137). The uprisings and strikes shook Diaz. The people who had been silent for so long were now beginning to speak for themselves. He began the systematic repression of liberal and working class organizations throughout the country. The United States authorities did the same and began the hunt for Flores Magon and his associates. After narrowly avoiding arrest several times, Flores Magon finally settled in Los Angeles in the spring of 1907, to be joined by Antonio I. Villarreal and Librado Rivera. In June, working clandestinely, they brought out the first issue of *Revolucion*. In August the three men were arrested without warrant by "detectives" of the Furlong Detective Agency who were employed by the Diaz dictatorship and whose sole aim was the tracking down of PLM activists. They were placed on trial the following month and were eventually found guilty of violating the neutrality laws and sentenced to be deported to Arizona where the alleged offense was supposed to have taken place. While in prison Flores Magon smuggled out plans for a second uprising and in June 1908 insurrections by PLM groups occurred in the states of Baja California, Coahuila and Chihuahua. ut as in 1906 the revolt failed and was followed by the usual repression. At this time Flores Magon, Villarreal and Rivera were still in jail in Los Angeles, but they also managed to smuggle out a "Manifesto to the American People," explaining their objectives and the reason for their persecution by the American authorities. It was published in *Mother Earth* in February 1908:

"What do we want? The program of the Liberal Party issued on the first of July of the year 1906 is the sum and substance of our aims and aspirations... We want bread for all. We consider it absurd that a few people should possess the earth, and the many not have a place to lay down their heads for rest. We want, then, that the land be accessible to all, just the same as the air, the

**We want, then, that the land be accessible to all, just the same as the air, the light, the warm sun rays are there for all creatures on earth. We consider it absurd that those who neither toil nor produce should enjoy all at the expense of those who till and toil and have a life of misery...**



light, the warm sun rays are there for all creatures on earth. We consider it absurd that those who neither toil nor produce should enjoy all at the expense of those who till and toil and have a life of misery...

We think that political liberty is a beautiful lie so long as it has not for its basis economic liberty and towards the conquest of that liberty our steps are directed... We demand that the proletariat of Mexico organize and by doing so enable itself to take part in the tremendous struggle that alone will liberate the proletariat of this world, the struggle which someday—maybe in the near future—will place all the goods of this earth within the reach and power of all human beings" (Flores Magon 1977: 16).

It was evident that within the PLM only Flores Magon, his brother Enrique and Librado Rivera fully endorsed anarchism; Juan Sarabia, Antonio I. Villarreal and Camillo Arriago being essentially liberals. Villarreal later became a stalwart of the constitutionalists. Although describing himself as a liberal, Flores Magon was fully aware that his own basic philosophy and political credo was anarchism. In a letter to his brother and Praxedis Guerrero written from prison in 1908, he wrote:

"...If we had called ourselves anarchists from the start, no one, or at best a few, would have listened to us. Without calling ourselves anarchists we have fired the peoples' minds with hatred against the owner class and the government caste.

No liberal party in the world has the anti-capitalist tendencies of we who are about to begin a revolution in Mexico and we would not have been able to achieve this had we merely called ourselves socialists instead of anarchists. Thus everything is a question of tactics.

We must give lands to people during the course of the revolution; thus they will not be deceived. We must also give them possession of the factories, mines, etc. In order not to have everybody against us, we should continue to call ourselves liberals during the course of the revolution, and will in reality continue propagating anarchy and executing anarchist acts" (Flores Magon 1977: 17).

Whereas the Bolsheviks in the Russian revolution proclaimed: "All Power to the Soviets" and land for the peasants in order to obtain working class support, only to institute state capitalism and a

one-party dictatorship, Flores Magon proclaimed liberalism but was intent on establishing libertarian socialism.

On their release from prison in Arizona, where they had served an eighteen month sentence, Magon, Rivera and Villarreal returned to Los Angeles, arriving there in August 1910. They immediately began making plans for a third armed uprising. Already peasant discontent had manifested itself, for in May around 1500 armed peons had taken the town of Valladolid, Yucatan, and had held it for four days, before being overwhelmed by the federal army. The following month several other uprisings occurred, all in the name of the PLM. In October 1910 the motto of the party was changed to "Tierra y Libertad"—land and liberty. As Magon declared in an editorial in *Regeneracion*: "The Land! shouted Row, the Land! shouted Ferrer, the Land! shouts the Mexican revolution." In the following month a liberal landowner from Oahuila, Francisco Madero, called on Mexicans to rise up in arms against the hated dictator. This is seen by many historians as the signal which heralded the beginning of the Mexican revolution. From the outset Flores Magon realized the kind of political revolution that Madero envisaged was a limited one. As he wrote:

"...Governments have to protect the right of property above all other rights. Do not expect then, that Madero will attack the right of property in favor of the proletariat. Open your eyes. Remember a phrase, simple and true and as truth indestructible, the emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves" (*Regeneracion*, December 10, 1910).

In a circular sent out by the PLM to all its members a month before, the party made it clear that it wanted no pact or alliance with the supporters of Madero. The Liberal Party, it argued, "wants political and economic freedom by handing over the land to the people, the raising of salaries and the lowering of hours of work, and stopping the influence of the Church in government and the family. The anti-re-electionist party (of Madero) wants only political freedom leaving the land to the capitalists, the workers as beasts of burden, and the clergy to continue to brutalize the people" (Flores Magon 1977: 18).

Magon was convinced that a political

revolution alone was a sham, and would bring nothing but another tyrant. Putting an end to the despotism of Porfirio Diaz was insufficient; a social revolution also had to be instigated. He wrote:

"Political liberty requires as an adjunct another liberty to be effective, and that is economic liberty. The rich enjoy economic liberty as well and for that reason, in reality, they alone are benefited by political liberty" (*Regeneracion*, December 24, 1910).

It was then with sadness that Flores Magon learned that both Villarreal and Juan Sarabia had deserted the PLM and joined the supporters of Madero. He was equally saddened to learn of the death of Praxedis Guerrero. A poet and anarchist, only in his late twenties, Guerrero had been mainly responsible for directing the armed insurrection. But in December 1910, while leading a group of liberals in an attempt to take the town of Janos in the state of Chihuahua, Guerrero was killed (Poole 1978).

In the early part of 1911 PLM forces were particularly active especially in the northern states of Baja California and Sonora. But in May 1911 events took a different turn when a peace treaty was signed between Diaz and Madero. With Diaz's resignation on May 25th the revolution as far as Madero was concerned was over. But for Magon the revolution was just beginning. Inevitably a struggle ensued between the PLM and the Maderist forces. The situation was clearly outlined in a letter that Magon wrote to E. E. Kirk that month:

"...The Mexican Liberal Party has no compromise to make with either Diaz or Madero. The proposed peace treaty between Diaz and Madero will not stop the revolutionary activity of the Liberals, nor the activity of the other revolutionary forces independent of Madero... Madero is not the revolution. Madero is simply a leader of forces at present under his command.

The Mexican Liberal Party has armed forces in all the states of the Mexican republic, and has the northern portion of Lower California in complete control.

The revolution of the Mexican Liberal Party is not a political but a true economic revolution" (Flores Magon 1977: 21).

Madero sent Juan Sarabia and Flores Magon's elder brother Jesus to Los Angeles hoping to induce the anarchist to call off the armed insurrections. But

**We think that political liberty is a beautiful lie so long as it has not for its basis economic liberty and towards the conquest of that liberty our steps are directed... We demand that the proletariat of Mexico organize and by doing so enable itself to take part in the tremendous struggle that alone will liberate the proletariat of this world...**

Flores Magon refused. Only when the social revolution was complete and the peasants and urban workers had control of the means of production would he give up the struggle.

Almost immediately Madero launched a campaign against the PLM forces within Mexico. At the end of June Madero's forces in Sonora captured and shot 28 PLM partisans, and soon afterwards the federal army was sent to Baja California to put down the revolutionary movement there. Because the Magonistas advocated the destruction of private property Madero is said to have distrusted and detested these social revolutionaries (Ruiz 1980: 144). Many members of the PLM throughout the country were being jailed in 1911 by the successor of Diaz.

In April 1911 the leading figures of the PLM still in exile in Los Angeles—Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magon, Antonio de P. Araujo, Anselmo L. Figueroa and Librado Rivera—issued a "Manifesto to the Workers of the World." It explained that the people of Mexico, under the banner of the Red Flag, had for four months been in open rebellion against their oppressors. And taking part in the insurrection in support of the people are "those who know that the emancipation of the workers ought to be accomplished by the workers themselves, those convinced of direct action, those who deny the 'sacred' right of property, those who do not take up arms for the purpose of raising any master to power, but to destroy the chains of wage slavery." Such revolutionists were represented by the Mexican Liberal Party group. They were not engaged in struggle merely "to destroy the dictator Porfirio Diaz in order to put in his place a new tyrant. The Mexican Liberal Party is taking part in the actual insurrection with the deliberate and firm purpose of expropriating the land and the means of production and handing them over to the people, that is, to each and every one of the inhabitants of Mexico, without distinction of sex."

The Manifesto repudiates the party of Madero, a millionaire who has seen his fabulous fortune grow with the sweat and tears of the peons of his haciendas. His party is a purely political and conservative party, interested only in establishing a bourgeois republic and protecting private property. It calls for political and material support for the social revolution in Mexico.

In September 1911 a second manifesto was published by the same organizing group, and it might be useful to quote a few extracts as it gives a cogent outline of the libertarian socialist tendency of the PLM.

"But for the principle of private property there would be no reason for government, which is needed solely to keep the disinherited from going to extremes in their complaints or rebellions against those who have got into their possession the social wealth. Nor would there be any reason for the church, whose sole exclusive object is to strangle in the human being the innate spirit of revolt against oppression and exploitation, by the preaching of patience, of resignation and of humility... Capital, Authority, the Church—there you have the somber trinity that makes of this beautiful earth a paradise for those who, by cunning, violence and crime, have been successful in gathering into their clutches the product of the toiler's sweat, of the blood, of the tears and sacrifices of generations of workers; but a hell for those who, with muscle and intelligence, till the soil, set the machinery in motion, build the houses, and transport the products. Thus humanity remains divided into two classes whose interests are diametrically opposed—the capitalist class and the working class...

Mexicans! The Mexican Liberal Party recognizes that every human being by the very fact of his coming into life, has a right to enjoy each and every one of the advantages modern civilization offers, because those advantages are the product of the efforts and sacrifices of the working class from all time...

Expropriation must be pursued to the end, at all costs, while this grand movement lasts... Expropriation must not be limited to taking possession of the land and the implements of agriculture alone. There must be a resolute taking possession of all the industries by those working in them, who should bring it about similarly that the lands the mines, the factories, the workshops, the foundries... shall be in the power of each and every one of the inhabitants, without distinction of sex...

Liberty and well-being are within our grasp. The same effort and the same sacrifices that are required to raise power to a governor—say a tyrant—will achieve the expropriation of the fortunes



the rich keep from you. It is for you, then, to choose. Either a new governor—that is to say, a new yoke—or life-redeeming expropriation and the abolition of all imposition, be that imposition religious, political or of any other kind. Land and Liberty!" (Flores Magon 1977: 97-103).

In that same month—September 1911—responding to the criticism of former colleagues that Mexico was ill-prepared for either anarchism or socialism, Flores Magon was to write that the Mexican people instinctively hated authority and the bourgeoisie and that mutual aid and communal property was the rule among Indian communities in Mexico, until the "political and money bandits impudently robbed people of lands, forest, everything" (Regeneracion, September 2, 1911).

By the end of 1911 the PLM were in open opposition against Madero, who in October had become president. The following month Emiliano Zapata also rebelled against Madero and in November issued his plan for Ayala. Zapata adopted the slogan of the PLM "Land and Liberty" and many of his ideas were clearly derived from Flores Magon. Of all the revolutionary groups within Mexico it was only the Zapatistas with whom the PLM had any connection. As Enrique Magon put it:

"...These Agrarians (Zapatistas) and the Liberals work together owing to the fact that the former are direct actionists, although they still think a government is needed. They too, as the Liberals, have burned to ashes the private property deeds as well as all official records; have thrown down that marked private properties... So Liberals and Agrarians work together in conjunction and good harmony" (quoted in Poole 1977: 83).

Although Zapata was an agrarian socialist, he was not as we shall see, an anarchist.

In June 1912 Flores Magon and three of his associates were again arrested for alleged violation of the neutrality laws. They were sentenced to twenty-three months imprisonment. When the sentences were known there was a mass demonstration outside the courtroom. It was broken up by the police who made several arrests. While the PLM group were imprisoned, Regeneracion continued publication, edited by such people as Antonio de P. Araujo, Alberto Tellez, Teodoro Gaitan and the English anar-

chist W.C. Owen. While Magon was in McNeil Island Prison land expropriations continued to take place in Mexico.

On his release from prison in January 1914 Flores Magon again threw himself into the struggle. His brother Enrique and Librado were also freed from the McNeil Island Prison. For a while the junta of the PLM lived in a commune on a small farm on the outskirts of Los Angeles. Towards the end of the year the publication of Regeneracion had to be suspended because of lack of funds. In February 1916 Flores Magon and his brother were again arrested—this time accused by the United States' Postal authorities of sending material through the post that incited "murder, arson and treason." They were released on bail, put up by Berkman and Goldman. By this time Madero had been assassinated, and another wealthy *acendado*, Venustiano Carranza, had become president of Mexico. The publication of Regeneracion was resumed in 1916 and Flores Magon wrote scathing articles criticizing the Carranza regime, particularly its use of the urban workers, the "Red Battalions" to crush the Zapatistas. Flores Magon appealed to the workers:

"By taking arms against the workers of the fields," he wrote, "you have taken arms against your own interests, because the interests of the exploited are the same whether they use the plough or the hammer. You have shot down your class brothers, the Zapatistas and the anarchists of the Mexican Liberal Party with impunity, but in this way you have strengthened the enemy, the bourgeoisie" (Flores Magon 1977: 27).

Despite increasing ill health, for he suffered from diabetes and failing eyesight, Flores Magon continued to address meetings and with the help of Enrique and Librado to keep Regeneracion going on an intermittent basis—in spite of the repression. In March 1918, together with Librado, he published a manifesto to the Anarchists and Workers of the World suggesting that the demise of the "old society" was at hand, and encouraging everyone to fan the flames of discontent that had been lit by tyranny. Charged with violating the Espionage Laws Flores Magon and Librado Rivera were again arrested in March 1918. Magon was given a savage sentence of twenty-two years imprisonment. After a period in McNeil Island Prison, He was sent to Leavenworth

Prison in Kansas. His health rapidly deteriorated due to a lack of proper medical attention. In 1920 he was offered a pension by the Mexican government but this he declined. Two years later with the founding of the anarcho-syndicalist Confederacion General de Trabajadores (CGT) a campaign was launched in Mexico calling for the release of Flores Magon and Rivera, and the boycotting of US goods. But the action came too late, for Flores was found dead in his cell on November 22, 1922. It was alleged that he died of a heart attack, but according to Librado Rivera he had been murdered by the prison authorities. He was forty-eight. Workers from the Confederation of Railway Societies transported his body back to Mexico. At every town where the cortege stopped, thousands of workers gathered to pay their respects, waving black and red flags. In Mexico City around ten thousand workers attended Flores Magon's funeral. For years his brother Jesus, who became a prominent lawyer and a member of Madero's government, had tried to persuade him to give up politics and return to Mexico, but Flores Magon always remained fanatically loyal to the anarchist cause.

The following year his brother Enrique and Librado Rivera were released from prison (Poole 1977: 83). Rivera settled in Mexico and continued to spread anarchist propaganda, editing the anarchist periodical *Sagitario*. He was imprisoned several times and was killed in an automobile accident in 1932. For more than twenty years he had been a close friend and colleague of Flores Magon....

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# GREAT GRUNTING GROANS

by Lorna McLaughlin

Colleen wanted to end *that life*, and it wasn't before, after, or during her period. Wanted to, wanted to, and didn't know why. She sat in a

straight backed chair with her feet caught in the cross bar. Her body was arched back; her feet were arched and bent torturously forward. She rocked the chair back and forth, holding onto the desk, and she stared intently at the screen.

"I hope zoology isn't the last entry in the encyclopedia," Colleen said to William, her blonde lover.

"It can't be," he said. "Why not?" Colleen said.

"There's Zurich, Switzerland, for one," he said.

"And Zoroaster," Colleen said as the screen changed.

"Zwingli," she said moments later, as if hushed.

"And it's only taken us all day and all night," William said from the bed beside her desk and bookshelves. His head lay at the wrong end and was propped by five pillows from which he comfortably watched her, studied her body moving with the chair, her small white hands holding onto the desk. She could do things with her hands.

"Unlike the rest of mankind, we travel at a speed faster than the brain's impulse," she said, and turned to see if he was listening.

"Mind if I change the song?" he said. "Three hours of that is enough for me and should be for you." William stood, nude, and pushed the appropriate button on her disc player. "What are we going to do now?" he

look in real encyclopedias," she said.

\* \* \*

"An atlas?" Scott said. He pulled away from her body and leaned against the cold wall beneath a picture of Colleen painted in Paris; a self-portrait in deep chiaroscuro.

"I often find sex boring," Colleen said.

"You weren't bored when we first started," he said.

"I was, but I was thinking about Russia and that made me seem less bored," she said.

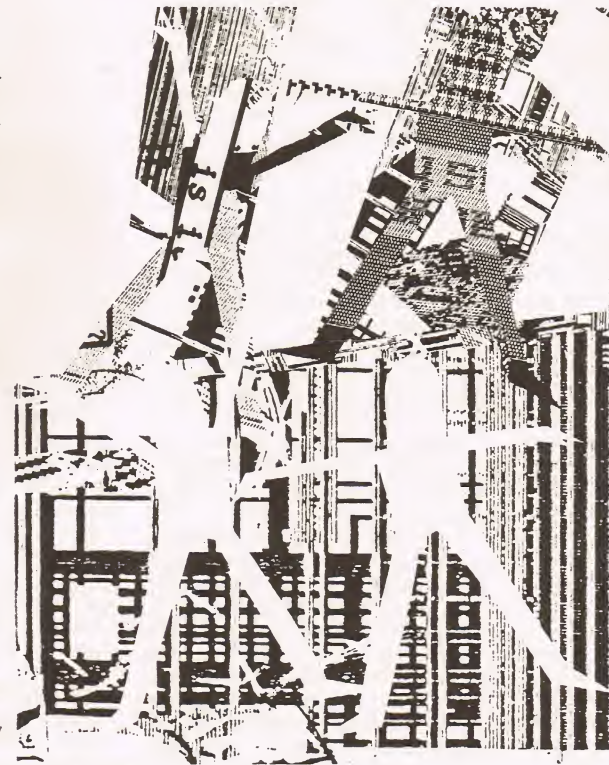
*Pure maid, covered with skirts, what lies have you seen perpetrated.*

"I don't want to play games," Scott said. He pressed her face between his hands and looked into her green eyes; she moved her eyes down to study the map. He crawled over her body, smudging the atlas wedged between the sheet and her lap, with sweat from his knee. He gathered his clothes and went into the bathroom and came out dressed in jeans and a rugby shirt.

"I thought you cared about me," he said standing over her.

"I do care about you but you smudged the agricultural region of central Russia with your sweaty knee. Now I can't tell what they grow there."

"I'm leaving and I won't be back. I'm sorry I smudged your atlas," he said through clenched teeth.



Mark Neville

said.

She let the chair fall to all four legs and untwisted her feet. She hummed the *eye of fatima* and turned off the computer, covering it with plastic.

"Now we're going to the library to



"I'm reading Dostoyevsky," Colleen said.

"Which of Dostoyevsky," she said, motioning to a shelf that held each published work. The afternoon sun came into the room, lighting each volume with holiness and approval.

"That's good for you," William said. "How do you know what's good for me?" she said.

"It's good that you've stopped thinking about suicide," he said.

"I haven't," she said.

"Then you need to talk to someone," he said.

Colleen frowned, looking at him through half-closed eyes.

"How do you know what I need?" she said.

"I know that if you're going to be a bitch I'm going to leave," he said.

"I won't be a bitch. I'm swearing off bitchiness right now," she said. She sat up straight and smiled weakly.

"Why do you get like this? We could be having so much fun. Do you really, honest to God, think so much about dying?" he said.

"If I talk I'll be bitchy and you'll leave. Don't make me talk," she said. He pulled her up to him, smoothing her red hair back from her face, pulling wayward strands out of her lashes.

\* \* \*

Scott brought Colleen a book from the pink bookstore that had been a gas station; he didn't think she would always want to be reading maps or he would have purchased another atlas. He looked at several different atlases but they reminded him of her rejection. He looked at a book of Persian legends and almost bought a book of maps that illustrated where various tribal Indians had lived in North America. Then he found a book on the assassinated John Kennedy and immediately felt it was the right book to give Colleen.

It was a used book, an old book published by the Associated Press.

*The Torch Is Passed...* a line from Kennedy's inaugural address, graced the maroon cover of the book.

The book, once a gift of Miss Charlotte Davis to the library of her choice, now had loose and chipped pages. A librarian had written 92 KEN on the

title page, and then again on the last page across from the pocket that held the reference card.

Colleen looked on the due date sheet for her birthday, or for Scott's birthday. She found William's birthday: October 21, 1969; William's birthday and the second time the book was due back at the library of Miss Charlotte's choice.

"Thank you Scott, for this wonderful book. Do you think he really slept with all those women in the White House bed," Colleen said.

"He was a great president," Scott said.

"It depresses me to think about it. But thanks for thinking of me," Colleen said and kissed him. She made love to him and Talk About The Passion played over and over on the stereo, a theme song for their union, during which she thought over and over, desperately, that she didn't know anyone strong enough to bear the weight of the world.

\* \* \*

"I brought this," Greg said. He pulled a bottle of tequila from the inside of his jacket. The collar of his jacket stood high around his neck, away from his neck, like a puppet's jacket held by strings.

"I brought these," William said of two perfectly green limes and a small paring knife with a black plastic handle.

"I'll get some glasses," Colleen said. Walking into the kitchen she heard William tell Greg that she had been thinking of killing herself.

They were almost drunk when they reached the nightclub on Cotton but they were among friends. As the musicians tuned their guitars and warmed up on drums, William and Greg led her to drink at the Sportsman's bar, next door, where hard liquor was routinely served. The Sportsman's bar was underground and famous in its way. Moments later Colleen followed them out of the club and down the sidewalk, through a door and down steep steps into the bar.

It was a real bar and in no way a nightclub. Here were true winos and actual hobos from the train yard a few streets over who sat in various pockets of the pool table sized room. Behind the bar was a mirror lined with bottles

and pictures of nude women. A nude Barbie, tied to a bottle of vodka, was thrust forward like a ship's ornament. Colleen was the only non-image non-plastic female in the bar. She was not as delighted the other ladies were to be there but she was more drunk.

William, then Greg, then William, then Greg, bought drinks for the three of them and also for a homeless man who sat away from the bar watching Colleen's face in the mirror. She focused on a dangling glow-in-the-dark skeleton while an elderly man at the end of the bar swung a piece of yarn for a calico cat who jumped wildly after it. Every few minutes he fed her pieces of sausage from a smelly can that made Colleen feel nauseous.

They drank scotch and water and listened to the bartender give Sportsman's bar history lessons until the band started next door. The bartender started to cuss.

*It's only decadent if you're poor.*

Their table had been kept for them; the drink Colleen left behind was watered down from melted ice. The band played only their own; however, when they played at home they covered a sixties song that reminded the lead singer of Colleen. Colleen was too drunk to recognize the song but her red eyes cleared inside the harmonica and she recognized his voice when he started to sing.

Greg stumbled outside and came back with a rose from a street seller. Red faced, he sat down abruptly and tossed the red flower across the table at Colleen. She laughed hysterically at the rose and swirled her fingertips in the water that stood in puddles on the table.

"I'm ready to go," Greg shouted across the table at William who had watched the presentation of the rose with mild amusement.

"What?" William shouted back.

Colleen took William's arm and pulled him over until his ear was on her mouth.

"I don't want to go," she said into his ear.

\* \* \*

Colleen got out of the backseat and walked around the front of the car where Greg met her, arms outstretched. In the brief second of her trust he knocked her into the car's

bumper with the force of his body and rubbed his genitals on the hip she twisted out; she pushed the point of her elbow angrily into his face.

"Stop it," William said. He leaned against Colleen's cold car and, laughing so hard, held his sides.

"Don't come upstairs," Colleen said, but they were already on the stairs behind her. Once inside the apartment the talk turned to books as William told Greg that Colleen was reading all of Dostoyevsky.

"Don't you think he just makes up events so he can write about weird people?" Greg said and put his arm around Colleen's shoulder.

"Don't do that," she said.

"Just let me touch your breasts and I'll leave. If not touch, then just see," he said. She called William who was looking at a magazine with his back turned to them.

When Greg said, "Your cups runneth over," William finally turned and Colleen pushed Greg across the room to him. William mumbled something and began pulling Greg from the kitchen, out of the apartment, down Colleen's front stairs. They yelled at her from William's car but she couldn't understand them until it became completely silent and then she heard Greg tell William in a quiet voice that Colleen had no sense of humor.

She heard the car engine start but saw them pull out of the driveway before shutting their doors and she prayed they wouldn't crash.

She went to sit on the white carpeted floor by her bed and pulled the telephone from beneath the bed. She dialed Scott's number but there wasn't an answer. She hung up and dialed his number again and then again. She finally looked up the nightclub's number and asked to speak to the lead singer.

"He's gone," the voice said. "Anyway, he was wasted. He's at a party if you want to go," the voice said.

She called William's apartment but he was not home or had already passed out. Then either a girl answered Scott's phone or Colleen had dialed the wrong number. She dialed it again and there was no answer. She put the phone away and turned on the computer, then turned it off. She picked up the book she was reading but it seemed tarnished. She looked at

every large book she had until finding the book about John Kennedy.

\* \* \*

*Last night the people who usually keep me alive were not available and so I died. But before I died I looked at a book about you. There was a big picture of you and your beautiful wife and interspersed throughout the book were pictures of your casket.*

\* \* \*

It's burnished blue around the edges of the penny; a burnished blue halo above Lincoln's head. Liberty is almost obliterated and the copper is dark and lifeless. It is 1990.

Most of the penny is dark and framed by the dark but Lincoln is in an opalescent bubble of shiny copper, though only part of Lincoln: Lincoln's chest, Lincoln's beard, Lincoln's nose.

A blue the color of turquoise sinks around the words that border the upper portion of the penny; a thick blue, like wax, but the color of stone.

Lincoln through the fire. Lincoln in two shades of green. Green like moss and green like powder. Lincoln with fungus on his face, or patina: Lincoln the flat sculpture, Lincoln the tiny bas-relief.

Lincoln hammered away. Lincoln left on train tracks. Lincoln pierced. Lincoln pierced. Lincoln welded.

\* \* \*

"I called you last night," Colleen said. "When I couldn't reach you I looked at books. Then I got out my pennies and looked at all the living Lincolns," she said.

"We went to a party. Sorry Greg got so drunk," William said.

"You were just as drunk," she said.

"He doesn't even remember it. He wants to apologize."

"Oh well, it's not as if we're honorable human beings."

"You are," William said.

"I wonder what it feels like to be honorable. Maybe I should just grow

into it," Colleen said.

"You are honorable," William said, and hung up the phone.

\* \* \*

*I was trying to make myself believe the torch had been passed to me, member of a new generation of Americans, born this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of my ancient heritage. I died when I realized there was nothing extant to die for, and nothing for which to live.*

\* \* \*

"You shouldn't have let us in free last night. I wanted to pay but William said it would make you very happy to let us come in free," Colleen said to the lead singer.

"Was he just drunk last night when he told me that you want to die?" the lead singer asked. His green eyes moved from her face to the plastic container she held on her lap. Her fingers moved through the dish that had once held pimento cheese, moving the coins in a repetitive, obsessive, lift and fall.

"Then why are you giving me that cup of money?" he said.

"It's blue pennies. They came from the old black men who used to buy tobacco at my parents store in Greenwood. Remember when I used to work there? I was looking at blue pennies one day and my dad saw me. He told me I'd never see anyone but niggers using money like that because only niggers dig through ashes from burned down houses."

"Why are you giving them to me? You're not giving all your stuff away, are you?" he said.

"This cup holds the National Treasure of the United States of America. Only we know, of course. And also, so you don't get bitter about being poor and I don't get bitter about being just breasts. Okay?" she said.

"Okay," he said, uncomprehending. He sat in the chair at her desk, she sat on her bed. Sunlight poured in from the sliding glass door on the opposite side of the room. He stared at her body. He had once known it very well and had even continued to dream about her body though it usually wore a different, more recent, face.

Continued on page 45





# AN ENTERTAINING STORY:

## *A Short Corporate Fiction*

by Marc L. Sherman

**T**his is a story. A short story. An entertaining story. This story is not for thinking, and, heavens forbid, for action. Stay seated. Enjoy.

This is a story about a man. He's in his middle age, his black and blue periods, a moment of life in which time has finally caught up with him and grabbed his fleeting attention by the scruff of its neck. Ahhhh! The story is about that.

This story is about a woman. She's in her middle age, her scarlet period, a whirlwhisp of time in which life has finally caught up with her, reached out its long and withered fingers, chapped by domestic drudgery, tapped her on the shoulder and pointed her to the threshold. This story is about that. Also.

This story is about entertainment; for entertainment; your entertainment. Everyone's entertainment. A truly democratic story. It is not to make you think. It thinks. It entertains. Watch it tapdance down the marble steps, just like Mr. Billy Bojangles. It slips on a banana peel and falls on its keister. A cream pie streaks across the sky and hits it in the face while a ukulele lady twangs her rhythms.

Yes, this is a story. About hemorrhoidal horror—the horror, the horror. About acid eating at the stomach. Sizzle, tear, shred. The man's sitting at his terminal. Terminal. An end user. He punches in numbers and words and data. He presses buttons and keys to change to zeros and ones that which cannot be digitalized without losing the essence. He strikes with abandon. Symbols lost in their significance,

somewhat weary, somewhat lean, arrange themselves in syntactical battalions, ready for marching orders from somewhere off-screen. His eyes vibrate with the flashing cursor. e scratches himself upon the arm of the plastic chair, cursing the pain in his keister. Day after day, he sits there, day after day, cursing and weary and lean. One day he will leave. He thinks.

And Hollywood can't make a movie of this story, because it occurs only on the page. And no New York publishing house can make a best-seller of it, because, it is, after all, only a short story. Short-legged. Short-winded. Short-lived. Short-changed.

The woman, she wipes off her pale pink hands with a clump of paper towels. Half-dry, she dumps the load thoughtlessly into a plastic sack. Morning dishes done, kids off to school, she can think about her day. She thinks.

But this is not a story for thinking. Although the characters may. Maybe.

Now what about the corporation? "What corporation?" you think. The corporation is another character in the story. But can a corporation be a character? But can a corporation think? Do not answer such questions—that is the job of the story. Or is it the story's job just to ask them? Certainly it is its job, not yours. It thinks.

The Corporation employs the man. The Corporation entertains the woman. The Corporation enjoys the story, but it must enjoin it before it gets too far. Do not raise questions, story. Thinking must not be done by stories, that is for people to do. The Corporation thinks.

The man has worked for the Corporation over these past fifteen years. Six

at this cubicle alone. He started in the mailroom, transporting mail to those lofting high in the black glass towers. He was energetic then. Always on his feet. Running, this way and that, ever ready to please. Please the Corporation. But can a corporation be pleased? Don't think about it. That is for the story and the story's not yet enjoined.

The woman used to work for the Corporation. Now the Corporation works for her. The Corporation makes her life easier. It provides her dishsoap to soften her hands, plastic bags for her garbage, chemicals to keep her house clean, leaded make-up for her eyes, detergent gasoline for her new sportscar, freon for her air conditioner, cigarettes to keep her calm, styrofoam food for her microwave and, most important, commercials for her T.V.. The Corporation is good, is strong, she thinks as she kisses the tissue it makes to remove excess lipstick.

The story progresses into a bookstore. All the books are fiction, ten to fifteen percent off. Fiction Lite. Reads great, less filling. Nothing fancy. Simple. Symbols. No more than four-syllable words. None of that deep philosophy or social criticism stuff. Nothing to think about; don't think about it at all. The books all look alike and tell the same story. The story's story. But the story may be enjoined.

The story thinks it will take action. It complains to the bookseller. She sits behind her plastic cash register/computer. Every now and then she pushes her round wirerimmed glasses up the bridge of her patrician nose. She can't hear a thing. She is reading the story, surreptitiously.



The man's computer screen is flashing and buzzing like the Fourth of July. It seems to have found the answer. It has thought it through, using ones and zeros reduced from words and numbers and other sorted data. He has entered each complex significant. The computer, in its turn, has ignored all the nuances. Nuances only confuse. The computer simplifies all to symbols. Ones or zeros, it almost doesn't matter which. While waiting for the computer to finish his thinking the man rubs along the chair, hoping no one will notice.

He is dazed by the machine's confident brilliance. His eyes shudder back and forth, up and down. They bounce in hypnotic rhythm as the answer scrolls down the monitor, appearing for a moment, then exiting, blinking from the electric cathode eye. He wouldn't have been able to think this through. He couldn't even figure out the question. But he, not it, will get the credit. It, after all, is only a machine. He thinks.

He thinks. Maybe a raise, maybe a promotion, maybe his own office, maybe a raise. Yes, a raise, won't that make the woman happy, he thinks. He thinks!

The story takes a night off to celebrate its success—its anticipated success. Like all stories, it is confident, maybe even cocky. It must be. If it doesn't think it knows what it thinks it knows, then what does it know, it thinks, and who will read it? Without readers, no entertainment. Without entertainment, no purpose.

So the story goes to the best restaurant in town and orders lobster. It picks a live one from the tank, claws tied together with plastic twirler things. The waiter, in silk penguin suit, tie slightly askew, presents the story with drawn butter, butter made by Corporation cows in their Corporation stalls. He ties a plastic bib about the story. The story grabs the lobster with its short story appendages and twists the claws from the body, sucking out the succulent white meat. The story will not use the Corporation's butter. The lobster is delicious on its own.

The woman, household chores complete, dons her red silk dress. She shimmy into it. It clings to her lacy nylon padded bra and halfslip. A matched set. The dress hides her bulg-

es and accentuates her curves. Her black stockings encase her cellulitid thighs. She's the very image of television perfection. Thank you, Corporation," she thinks, "you make my life worth living." As she starts towards the door, she balances carelessly on top of her spiked heels. Don't fall," the story warns. "Careful!" She's too full of her thoughts to hear.

The man prints off his—well, the computer's—answer. Twenty-one percent saving on an insignificant investment—petty change. Increased profits on the product line. Seventeen percent mark-up with only minimal marketing. Just reposition the product—change the label, change the color. A few new commercials and everyone will think the product is not only better, but is actually good for them, good for the country, good for the environment. It is good. Good for him, good for the corporation. The graphs look impressive, bars and numbers and pie-like circles and different colors—blue, red, yellow—no green. Heavens forbid.

He thinks: This will wow them. Finally. My big break. I am moving now. My turn. The little woman will be so proud. We'll move into a great big house. Send the kids to big private schools. Buy a big car. Go to big parties. Go on a big vacation. He thinks. Big.

The story thinks. Tries to. But it is a short story; it gets drunk easily. The waiter has been keeping the story's wine glass full. To the rim. The waiter knows which side his corporate bread is corporate buttered on. And anyway, the story has been celebrating. Tying one on. It throbs with thought. It dreams of growing up into a big story, one with its own office, its own computer. It imagines itself grandly expanded, with variations and themes, complex characters and even messages and significance. American Gothic. Now that's entertainment. It pictures itself on stage with a string of Rockettes, scantily attired, extending their lacy legs into the audience. It croons into the microphone. The audience is on its feet applauding.

But the thoughts don't seem to flow anymore. The story just flashes on visions of the woman, the man and the Corporation. Like the computer with the mans answer, the data don't fit into zeros and ones. The results don't

all fit onto the screen. They scroll past. There, then gone.

And something is missing. Nuances? Significants? Symbols? The story thinks that it is making up the story of the man finally hitting it big, the woman going out on her rendezvous and the Corporation that serves them... oh so well. It thinks the man, the woman and the corporation are entertaining.

But it is they, the Corporation, the man, the woman, who are thinking the story. It is the story, not the woman, man or Corporation, which is here to entertain. The story is not to think—it is thought. The story is not to create—it is wrought. How dare the story presume to even think it can create thought. The story is having self-doubts. Is it created by the trinity or did the trinity create it? The story feels itself vanishing. Vanishing before its own life. Vanishing before its maturity. It reaches for a drink. Yech, gasoline, dishsoap, chemicals. There is no alcohol with which it can fortify itself. It must survive, if survival is its fate, by pure perseverance. By sheer force of will. But can a story have will? Can it will its own will? Don't answer that. That is for the story, not you, to do. Will it? Stay tuned.

The woman is driving along the highway in her sportscar—a gift from the man. It is a beautiful spring day. Not a cloud polluting the sky. The canvas top's down so she can catch a bit of a tan. Poppies, fields of them, boldly poke their orange heads from amidst green shadows. Traffic is heavy; she doesn't mind. Her morning chores are done, the air, tinted with soot, breezes through her hair. She looks good in her red sportscar, sucking in her cigarette, rolling towards her rendezvous.

The man is calling up his corporate superiors. They won't be for much longer, he grins. He's pleased with himself. After all these years, he's finally made good. This wasn't even his assignment. It was extra work. He took the initiative. Stayed at work into the dirty nights of winter. He has sat for hours and hours, hemorrhoids swelling, coating his stomach with milk. The woman complained. She didn't like it. He bought her a car so she'd be happy. He told her the work, well, it was for her. And indeed it was. And indeed it will be. Won't she be proud?

The corporation is on the phone with itself, smoke rising from its cigarette—its own brand. It hacks into the phone. Excuses itself and laughs that it will have to quit someday soon. It knows it won't. Never will. Never would.

The Corporation is networking. Electrical impulses leap synapse to synapse. Digital data arrange themselves into little piles. The cleaning lady will sweep them up later. No reason to keep any records. It is all so clear, immediately. New York knows it; LA knows it; London knows it; Tokyo knows it—always had, always will. No reason to worry. The Corporation has no digestive problem and no hemorrhoids. It can eat anything and it never has to sit and rest. It is always running around, ever ready to be pleased.

The story, well, it knows too. Now. It knows when it is beaten. It has finally thought it through. Success. Success! It needs to be entertained—all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. So the story decides to take in a show. It is late. There aren't any art cinemas—theques open. Hollywood pictures are all the same. So it goes downtown. The story enters a porno house. Scarlet velvet cushions, crusty seats. It watches flesh melt into flesh. It wishes it were. It sits there mindlessly and itches itself. It has sat a long time and now its hemorrhoids are acting up again, but it is here to forget, not to think about it. It takes a snort of coke it bought in the restaurant's bar and sniffs it down. That's better. Did the Corporation make this too? No. No! No more thinking. Leave that to others.

The man is in an elevator. He is on his way to the top. He has a grin—hell, a smirk—on his face. He is carrying his charts, graphs and numbers, maybe a little text. It is well organized into a spiral bound booklet. Easy to digest. Simplified. Everything is in it. He knows he can't go wrong. His tie is straight and hair in place. This is it, he thinks.

The woman is in an elevator. She is on her way to the top. She wears a nervous smile. She smooths out her dress, pulls it down on the top so more of her cleavage shows through the revealed lace. Why hide it? Why, she looks like a cover girl, made up and dressed up. Her nails are perfectly pol-

ished, the same red as the dress. Her lips are puffed into cute scarlet cusps. Behind are lily white teeth, faintly smeared by leftover lipstick. This is it, she thinks. Her blue eyes shine bright with anticipation. The elevator doors slide apart and she walks into waiting arms, which immediately peel her from her well-chosen dress and whisk her onto the couch.

The Corporation is profiting from the exchange rate today. Its trading is pre-programmed. Its profits are well assured. It knows the margins before the markets open. It consummates deals. It undertakes takeovers, mergers and acquisitions. Manufacturing plants are operating at 110%. There is no time to waste on human frivolities. Workers give their all. Their needs are met with corporate demands. Allocation of leisure time is under firm control. Entertaining diversions are well-planned and well-spaced.

Personnel is well-rested. No complaints are recorded. All divisions report fully functional. The Corporation knows it is ready to perform.

The story is watching dumbfounded. It has lost its control. Did it have any to begin with? Its eyes roll up and down. The pictures, 24 per second are hypnotic, rhythmic. It didn't think such acts were possible. Wouldn't have believed it. Such strength, such determination, such confident vitality. The naked bodies go after each other in total abandon. No words. No story. Each body knows without thinking how to please the other. Each lunges into, on top of, between, around and through the other. Each fights for control and gives in totally to the other. Such unnatural acts. The story is disgusted. It slinks into its seat. But it is entertained. Completely. It sighs in exhaustion. It does not think. Finally.

The elevator doors slide open. The man steps over the threshold with a confident gait and a self-assured smile. It drops. He slumps. The spiral bound report falls to the carpet. The woman looks over. She's oblivious to him; her eyes wild without thought.

The Corporation rises from the couch, lights a cigarette with a fluorescent green plastic lighter and speaks softly, firmly. "Good work Johnson. Knew it was just a matter of time."

The man responds instinctively. No thought. Dazed by the mellifluous

seduction of the corporate voice, he unties his tie and sheds his wool suit. Offers the corporation himself, hemorrhoids and all. He does not think. He feels. Good.

The Corporation always knew it would have its way with him. Just a matter of time. Had to wait for the right moment to grab him. It didn't think about it. The Corporation just knew.

The Corporation knows the story by heart. It knows...

The End.

## Great Grunting Groans

*Continued from page 41*

"You want to make love, Colleen? For old time's sake," he said brightly.

"I've just given you the national treasure. How could I deny you anything else?" she said. She lifted her shirt and tugged it over her hair. When she opened her eyes he was kneeling on the floor, his hands were on her back trying to unclasp the bra.

\* \* \*

"Listen, brain. I'm speaking to you. I want to have comical dreams tonight, something very funny. I want to laugh in my sleep. I want light-hearted dreams."

Cups overrunning, that kind of humor?

"Not like that. Humor that doesn't hurt anyone, or pick on anyone's weakness."

"Do you have an example? You're the brain, you find it, you create it. A kindly humor. Remembering all of man's dignity."

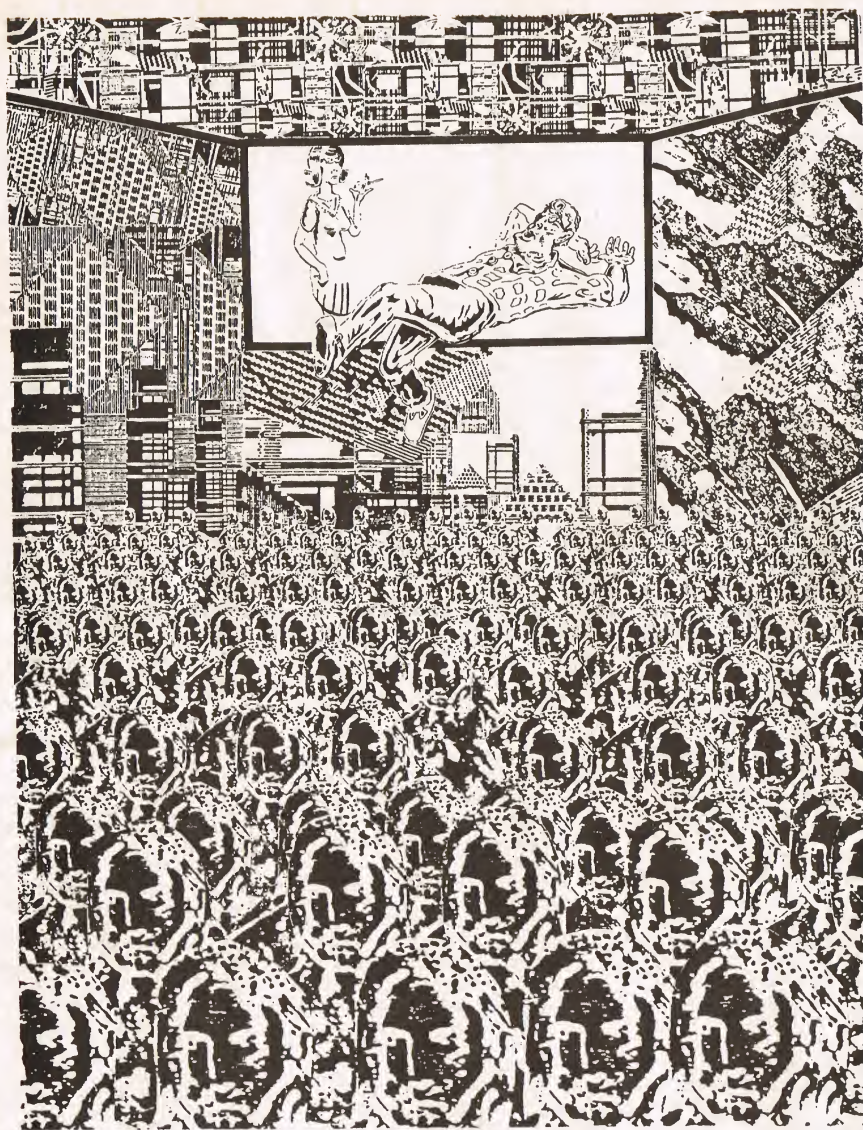
Satire is out then.

"Satire is out then," Colleen said outloud. "Try to remember that book about satyrs, about islands, about getting to the island on the fin of a dolphin." *About being small, a thumbelina. Going back in time, thinking. Or going forward, living. But not standing still because time does not, time cannot; the meaning of time is movement.*

Colleen dreamed about the president of the United States. Oddly, she walked anonymous streets and met him on every street corner. She would glance unknowingly and find him there. Embarrassed by the power, she would turn away, but held by the same power she would turn and look again. Sometime before each of her first and second looks the president always took off his pants. With every street corner, it seemed, he wanted more and more to know her.

Colleen woke up dazed, afraid, then she laughed the bittersweet laugh of the satirical dreamer.





Mark Neville

# REFRACTIONS

by Doug Bolling

Sometimes I follow crowds. Going where they go and keeping my mouth shut. Listening to their chatter, their swelling rages and disappointments, observing the bright splashes and plaids of their shirt and blouse, mingling of button down collar and high couture with an ocean of blue jeans, a democracy of fashion. Inside a crowd I feel safe, everybody seems to be going somewhere, every cat knows his way, I am alone and nobody bothers. It is a trip that costs nothing. It teaches me the need of a society. A social fabric as they say. To be yourself and part of the people at the same juncture. To be on the team but not to have to carry the ball, have your name on the roster but not have to swing the bat. Safety if not love.

I am walking along in search of a social mass. I am strolling in London or Miami or Dallas. On a tomato crate a plump middle-aged gentleman is telling us about the horrors of the nuclear age. His face is veined and purple, he is very sincere. We are all of us no more than twenty-eight minutes from the ground zero of a nuclear missile. They are pointed everywhere, no escape. I like this man, his ardent bulging eyes, soft voice, gesture and stance. His is a truth I cannot accept, live with. I pull away to be with the crowd shuffling around him, I prefer the scenery of the people. I am turning him off and walking on down the pavement. Everywhere the leaves are falling, the crows and squirrels seem indifferent to the dying clomping feet of the populace. I throw seed and nuts to the autumn wind and sink away.

I am out again looking. In front of a Picasso bronze a young woman is talking about the New Age of Woman. She is telling us the day of the male is over. Women are in every sphere of government business industry; in two

years we may have a woman in the oval office; the male chauvinist dare no longer rear his ugly face, his rapacious intent, chortled innuendo. The National Sperm Bank of Kansas City, Kansas, has rendered the erection inutile, the penis superfluous. The locutor is ablaze with the rightness of her words, she is searching the throng of her words for an antagonist, her eyes sweep toward and over me, I am still safe. Hands are clapping around me and I join in. She points fiercely into the far corner of the mall but no voice rises to challenge. The woman next to me murmurs that the occupant of the stage is a famous cinema star taking time off from her work to spread the message. It is built into her contract that she can do this anytime the director isn't ready to shoot. She is tall and blonde and speaks the words without a script. I couldn't do this, I'd be in trouble. I imagine she is smiling at me and I find a way to smile back. This tells me something personal can sneak into a group and at the same time you can be safe. I feel good now, I am watching her exit to a sleek dark limousine with flashing blue lights. She is off to an airport a speech a liaison with Goodbar. I am moving through the coats and dresses, the umbrellas and swinging purses. At the crowd's edge I become lonely again, I hesitate. Should I return to the center of this group or break away to wave after the speeding vehicle. It is already turning into 61st street. I tell myself someday I'll see one of her movies. Everybody around me is talking about *Encore L'amour*. It is the woman's latest hit, it is playing in sixty cities.

It is another day or another year. I believe it is early fall and I am testing the beaches of South Florida. I am afraid to go in the water, but I will enjoy getting close, letting the moist sand ooze through the sandals and about my toes. I am comfortable in my

trench coat and Giants hat. I look up and down the long running beach and observe many folk conducting their vacations. There are license plates from twenty-five states parked just beyond the ropes. I am feeling good, I am a part of the people. I'm a citizen. The breakers are crashing out beyond us but I am safe here with only the tiny fingers of water sucking at my toes.

Gradually I hear a great noise in the background. It is coming this way, it is a parade, a band of marchers. They are shouting skyward, they are chanting, I begin to pick out individual faces and torsos, the rhythm of their pace and musculature. I guess there are two hundred of them. My eyes pick up the banners the slogans, I am beginning to wonder if a war could break out here. The bodies are coming at me in tight rhythm, very orderly it seems. The participants wear suits and ties or neat dresses and heels, all of them seem to be in need of glasses. I wonder about the absence of blue jeans or upper body nudity. The wide canvas banners are only half a block away now, I can see very plainly the lettering DOWN...DOWN...DOWN, I can hear the roar-DOWN uh DOWN uh DOWN uh DOWN...the shoes and boots slapping smartly on the damp pavement...the remaining words are beginning to peek around the bobbing determined heads...the canvas tightens against the breeze...DOWN...DOWN...WITH...WITH...FORNICAT...ION...FORNI...CA...TION...FORNICATION...the voices are upon me...DOWN WITH...DOWN WITH FORNICATORS...GOD'S WRATH ON...ALL FORNICA-TORS...DOWN uh DOWN uh DOWN uh... I am directly in their path, I shuffle to the curb and lose myself in the chant, I am breathing heavily, I am conscious of the scarlet tincture of my neck and jowl, I feel the need to pee,



of a terrible retribution are falling down my puffy thin cheeks. A tiny but intent stream is making its way down my left leg, I can feel it pass my knee and curl into my sock, my shoe. In a minute I will be yanked out of my desk and exposed to the room, my shame will be known everywhere, the boy who peed in his pants in the eighth grade of the Brickhouse. I am thinking these things, I am sure...

Wiglaf's eyes are on me, they are large and glittery...the eyes are staring straight at me through me...a pool of urine is rising up a left shoe...a black sock is turning yellow in the yellow pool of pee...I am looking, waiting for the doom...something, something...suddenly it is changing...the horrible eyes are swinging around me, the torso the corset of power is beside and behind me...I am hearing a heavy breath from Peter Riess, he is turning around to look, he is watching something behind me, he is sneering at a sight down the row between Paul Korcher and Mary Mae. One of his long hairy arms is reaching down and snatching away the little folded answers, his ugly tongue spits out a bubble of saliva toward me. I watch it land on my shirt front. I am too dizzy to care, I still expect to be smacked from the rear...my eyes begin to want to turn with Peter's eyes, my body begins to swing around, I realize the huge silence suddenly in the room...everybody is screwing around to look at the rear of the room.

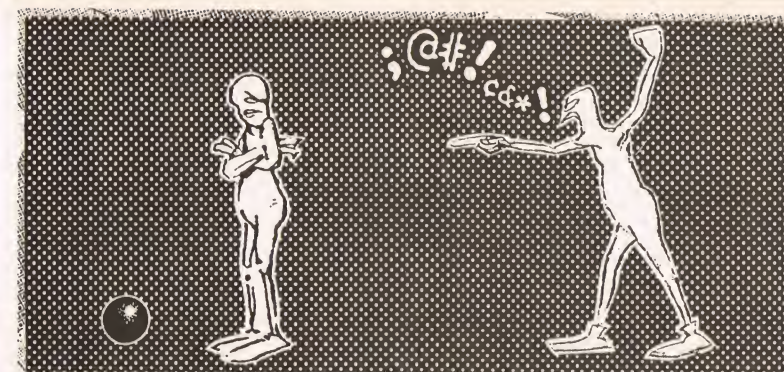
My eye catches the look on the face of the girl sitting across from me. Beverly Wilson's face is telling me something beyond words is happening...I am looking behind me now, I am seeing Mrs. Wiglaf standing beside the new boys desk. She is staring down at something in his pants...Earl Leaton the boy who started at the Brickhouse only a month ago, the boy called Little Earl by the others...he is crouched in the desk with his eyes closed, his mouth is hanging open and quivering...he seems ready to fall to the floor, to the dusty spot in front of Mrs. Wiglaf's shoes. She is telling Little Earl something, the words come out in hard cruel whispers, she is putting out her hand to clutch his shoulder, to inform him he is her prisoner, the words come out in hard cruel whispers, she is putting out her hand to touch his shoulder, to inform him he is her prisoner, the

words flow from her face that is beet red...from around Paul Korcher's shoulder I can see the stranger bringing up a dirty red handkerchief from his rear pocket...I see him dropping it over his pants, I see he is following the teacher's commands...I believe he is only able now to do what Wiglaf says. Wiglaf steps back and seems to pull the passive figure upward out of the desk...Little Earl is coming up and the truth is there for everybody to see or almost to see, everybody in this room feels it now...he is holding the piece of dirty cloth in front of him but he is not quite covered...his penis is out of his pants his zipper is wide open, the long white flesh is briefly exposed, it is still in a half state of erection...he is trying to cover himself but he is clumsy or slow or his fingers are trying for a last squeeze of pleasure release...Wiglaf is tugging sharply on his shoulder now, she begins to seem rattled...she looks up at the ceiling and barks an order for John Katzer to go for the principal...from the scarlet face comes another command for the rest of us to turn around and finish the test. The test on the vital gases of the universe. We are too creamed out to withdraw our eyes, we are too scared to disobey...the only thing in the room is the picture of little Earl sagging against Mrs. Wiglaf's rigid waiting body. I look one more time, I see there is no paper on this boys desk, I know he was not busy working at the questions, he was jerking off under the desk. All the time he was flunking the test so he could have a climax, he couldn't wait for later. I look at Paul Korcher, I see him with a new look on his heavy mean face. He is not laughing, he is mad. Suddenly it hits me he is mad at little Earl. Paul Korcher had forgotten me, he wants to get up and smash the new boys head in, he wants to do something violent about this violation of the rules. I sneak a look at Mary Mae, I need to know her reaction, I only see a look I've never noticed before. Maybe she was too close to the action, maybe some of Earl's stuff landed on her. She has turned around, she is placing the palms of her hands over her scarlet face, she is turning off.

There is ten minutes left on the test, ten minutes to sit in this room, to wonder, to put things more or less together. I am putting down another

answer, I am unable to know the words my pencil scratches out. I am happy that the two bullies are leaving me alone, they no longer seem to care about what I write down. They watched Mr. Staroff drag little Earl out of the room and they slumped down in their desks, they are playing it cool or something else. I wonder if they intend to flatten the new boy. I feel Earl might not be able to come back to the Brickhouse after this. I decide he should stay away, he should find someplace to go, hide. Someday he can start over. I realize I am feeling something very heavy about this Earl Leaton. He had a feeling in his pants he couldn't stop, control. He came to class the day of the test on gases but he didn't try to pass, he just did what he had to do and didn't care about anyone else being in this room. Maybe he tried to rub off without anybody knowing but he had to do this to himself. I see how his doing this probably saved me from Wiglaf: she caught Earl but she couldn't catch me cheating with the two bullies. Even years later I think about this, how the masturbator saved the cheater's skin. I think about Earl's shameful act in this public room, I remember my own guilts, the B I got on the test, the bullies two C's...I begin to feel better about the trip of masturbation, I decide it is a very human part of us, I decide Little Earl was human, Little Earl is a part of me. Gradually my brain clears, circles around into the present...

It is later, we're going along the trail, the esplanade, we are moving parallel to the sea, the roaring breakers. We're very strong, a crowd a group. I am beginning to get myself together, the anxieties are dropping away...I am accepted by these people around me in the ranks, I am telling myself how a fellow can live privately inside the method of a crowd, how he can be a regular guy but delve into secret feelings, secret memories. The chant is going up again, the chant is rising to put down the waves the solitary onlookers the misfits...the power of the chant is in me, I am very pleased to be part of this, I am happy to keep aglow in a secret place the consideration of the act of masturbation. Tomorrow I will be walking along in search of a crowd.



Graphic by Mark Neville (POB 3187, Fremont, CA. 94539-0318).

## Drifting away from the sacred:

Thoughts inspired by reading Peter Lamborn Wilson's *The Sacred Drift*

By Feral Faun  
My feelings when I read Peter Lamborn Wilson is that he wishes to live very much as I do, yet he looks to the realm of spirituality as a means to achieve this. To me, it is evident that this is another false path to autonomous self-creation—precisely because it is a path...and one that has been tried so often its failure should be self-evident.

The surrealists called for divergence from all known paths, yet their project proved to be absurd because they sought the marvelous in a passive way outside of any "spiritual" context. Nineteenth century materialism made the mistake of killing god without reclaiming what god had stolen from human beings and from the world. This left a wasteland. The surrealist attempt to use a kind of materialistic mysticism to reclaim this was bound to fail, in part because of its passivity and in part because of its reliance on the Freudian "unconscious" as the realm from which the marvelous would spring.

The "unconscious" realm, like the "spiritual" realm, is a social creation which relegates aspects of our lives

which would best be left open and accessible to a "hidden," "other" realm.... But Freud never even considered claiming what had been relegated to the "spiritual" for the "unconscious." When Jung did so, he did it merely by equating the "spiritual" with his highly questionable construct, the "collective unconscious"—thus, reclaiming nothing. The surrealists had no use for Jung's extension of religion's existence. But they also never recognized the banality of the Freudian unconscious—the marvelous is not there except on rare occasions by accident. The marvelous will only become an everyday reality when we reclaim for our everyday lives that aspect of living that has been relegated to nonquodidian realms.... This reclamation involves the active creation of marvelous, passionate intensities—not mere passive waiting.

It is the individual's capability for active, conscious, impassioned creation which was usurped to create the realm of the "spiritual" and was, thus, relegated to virtual non-existence. With the creation of gods all creative power was taken from the individual and invested in these invented beings—and their earthly representatives. The marvelous was turned into a gift from elsewhere.

The development of god coincides with the development of social control. God is, in fact, very much like society: neither one exists in itself—god exists only in the belief of the religious, and society exists only in the activities of social individuals. Yet god and society enforce the activities which continue

## Columns

their reproduction. The difference is that god exists only in the realm of belief—of ideas—whereas society exists in the realm of material interactions and so creates relationships which coerce even those who oppose social control into reproducing social control.

Capitalism has exposed the material basis of social interactions at the same time as it has created material social mechanisms to motivate people to continue

social reproduction. In other words, god and the spiritual are no longer necessary mystifications to enforce social reproduction. But the social mechanisms created by capitalism do not and cannot transform individuals into the conscious, autonomous creators of their own lives and interactions. Rather individuals are transformed into cogs in the mechanisms. God and spirituality remain as a solace (Marx's "opiate"), an escape and a facet of one's social identity (i.e., an ideological commodity). Stealing back the creative energy from the "spiritual realm" now is equivalent to taking back the power to consciously create one's life and interactions from society. But it is essential that we not forget that this war against society includes an attack upon the citadel of spirituality.

Recent revivals of mysticism, paganism and shamanism among certain radicals may be misguided attempts at reclaiming their lives, but they appear to me to be a retreat into a fantasy realm in the face of seemingly overwhelming social forces. These revivals indicate the continued lack of confidence of those involved in their ability to create their own lives, their own moments, their own interactions. It may also indicate a fear of the unknown—a preference for models, for paths, for systems of guidance—because in a world of autonomous creators, of unique, free individuals, there are no guarantees; nothing is certain; all of the maps, definitions and paradigms disintegrate.... Such a world is a world of terror and of wonder. For the courageous, mostly the latter.